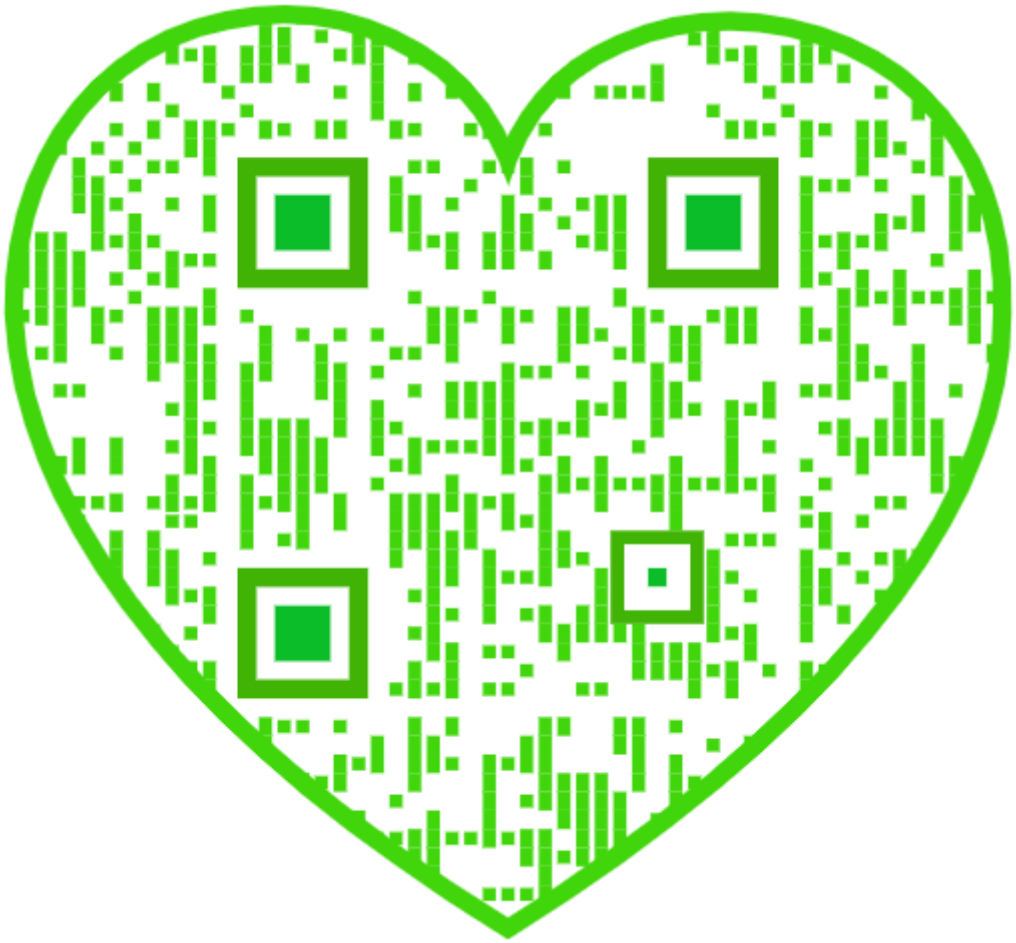

The Philosophy of Painting

A Study of the Development of the Art from Prehistoric to Modern Times

By

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Author of
"The Worth of Words," "The Changing Values of English Speech," "Words of the Wood," "The Religion of Beauty," "Taormina," "Art-Talks with Ranger," etc.

"I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes."

G. P. Putnam's Sons
New York and London
The Knickerbocker Press
1916

NII 50
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#1.25
MAR -4 1916

The Knickerbocker Press, New York

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À MONSIEUR

McDOUGALL HAWKES,

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PREFACE

PAINTINGS have been catalogued to death. There are enough histories of painting, such as they are; and as for dissertation and criticism, there is no end. It might seem presumptuous, therefore, to write anything further on a subject that has received so much attention from authors and scribblers alike. Perhaps it is. At all events, it has been done, and here it is. A long-winded apology could make it no better; and explanations would not excuse its defects. If it has any merits, they will take care of themselves.

With deference to a polite and tottering old custom, the author announces his purposes in writing the book: They were, *first*, to sketch the course and progress of the art in an easy perspective; *second*, to assemble some scattered material which is interesting and convenient to have in small compass; *third*, to give some results of his own reasoning, and playfully, as it were, to fly the kite of speculation from more or less solid ground; *fourth*, to hit some absurdities which have long been shameless bores; *fifth*, to correlate some relationships which reveal a tendency strong enough to be called a spirit; and *sixth*, to suggest

some theories which may be proved or disproved by more competent students. A half-dozen reasons, it must be conceded, are sufficient for the perpetration of anything except a crime.

The names of many worthy painters have been omitted; and very little reference has been made to the particular works of any. The scope of the book is broad, but its method is brief; and its nature does not demand a bibliographic list.

R. H. B.

New York, January, 1916.

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The Philosophy of Painting

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CHAPTER I

ART

ART and Nature are imperial terms; they divide the world into two parts. Like other imperial things they are not well defined,—the dividing-line between them is uncertain, unless we accept as true that Nature builds from within outward, principally by a process of division; and that Art assembles, or builds from without, largely by a process of addition, in which, however, there is often a synthetic element. Even so, this is the merest text of the matter.

Man is conscious of a series of nicely adjusted phenomena which take place and interact, so far as he can determine, without any regard to himself. This series of phenomena, of which his being is part but of no special importance, he calls Nature.

He is conscious of another series of phenomena which take place with peculiar reference to himself. In this he observes interaction at a minimum, and reaction upon himself at a maximum. This

series of phenomena he calls Art. He finds himself in a new world where his importance has become demiurgic. He has achieved a tremendous social triumph. He has created something either directly or indirectly as an agent or means. The evolution of his soul has brought forth what seems to be organic relationships between him and his environment; and these relationships work like an intelligent machine minting the precious currency of his emotions into a medium necessary not only to his spiritual well-being but for his further development.

Man studies the phenomena called Nature. In various ways and by a multitude of means he makes his inquiries. The only answers which he has ever had to his questions have been his own interpretations of the phenomena that he has studied. For example, his symbolic interpretations or equations of relationships, such as those which exist between numbers, masses, curves, series, densities, velocities, extensions or durations, and harmonies in space, he calls mathematics. This interpretation, having no emotive factor ordinarily apprehensible, is termed pure science.

We interpret the relationships existing between sounds. We assemble sonorous affinities under the sway of harmony; we arrange opposing elements of discord for purposes of contrast and balance according to a physiological requirement of being,—in a word, we marshal the relationships of sound and silence, as it were: of range, pitch,

pause, repetition, flow, and quality, so cleverly, and we interpret them so accurately with the mechanical assistance of our own organs and of instruments of our own make, that the result first startles the emotions, then quickly sublimates consciousness itself. This subtle and inscrutable miracle—this mystery of waves at play on unknown shores—relatively so young in creation and yet so intimately bound up in the very heart and core of primitive consciousness, is called music. In music there are powerful emotive factors; therefore we call it Art.

Man studies the drama of light and air. He apprehends some of the relationships existing between tinted shadows called colours in the solar spectrum; he sounds the deeper pools of shadow into which these spectral shadows flow on either side like living streams; he studies form and discovers laws of proportion; he becomes aware of harmony dressed in gay robes or vaguely mellow, and mysterious as the spirit of peace brooding over a still sleeping world. He interprets the things he sees and the world he feels. He takes a handful of clay and models it into a dream or a hope. He chisels delight or despair from a block of stone. With a piece of coal he throws the illusion of three dimensions into the space of two. With coloured earths and stains he imitates, emphasizes, subtracts, and adds. He has idealized something. His emotions enter the process, and he creates. With the meanest of means he has

performed another miracle. He has interpreted Nature, or another interpretation of Nature, in terms of his own soul. In this interpretation the emotive factor is dominant. We call his work Art.

We are conscious of an element called beauty. Without pausing to consider how, we are aware that we have contributed something to this element,—and we rejoice in the shining fact. If we reflect, we perceive that things are beautiful by the relationship which they bear us. The most beautiful thing, in some delicate manner, is most closely related to human happiness, to content or satisfaction, to our dreams of love or to the aspirations of our hope. The next most beautiful thing, perhaps, is related closely to our intellectualized emotions which thrill with delight at the discovery of some new feeling associated with some age-old experience—some sleeping joy of the past awakened by suggestion—some dear ideal suspended like a twinkling star, prophetic in the heavens of our consciousness. And the next most beautiful thing, lowest in order, is related to the gratification of our senses made keen by longing or desire.

Thus it would seem that Art is an emotive interpretation of environment, a social achievement, a necessary link in the chain of spiritual evolution, a language of the emotions with organic suggestions which fulfil in a measure the functions of words and phrases in speech—a language as vague as sighs, as indefinite as a smile, as eloquent

as a look, as unmistakable as tears and laughter—a language capable of various statement: incoherent, prosaic, poetic, and inspired or prophetic. Like a flowering vine it interweaves the consciousness of man with the surrounding phenomena; it beautifies his environment by chastening his vision; it sweetens his hope by purifying his heart; and it enlarges his spiritual world by stimulating the growth of his soul. In a word, Art sets fire to the imagination, and the flames are as wings. Thus the sense of being is transported from the meanest of surroundings to the most glorious of realms. Art creates stainless images, suggests harmony, and so inspires us with the melody of conduct that we call it morality.

CHAPTER II

PAINTING

THE art of a people is the tangible expression of the spirit of a people; it bears witness of things hidden; it palpitates with immortal longings, and, in some way, it seems to pass the flaming bounds of space and time.

Art belongs to no clique, and it cannot be cornered. It is the living voice for ever clear above "the sounding jargon of the schools." It thrives wherever imagination rises above brute want. It has its beginnings in utilitarian avocations when the sprite of play thrills the finger-tips of the craftsman. Art is then in its concrete stage. As it develops, it becomes ideal and abstract in character and big with a spirit "that gems the starry girdle of the year."

As a medium through which the emotions find expression, art expands and parallels the language of thought; it takes on broad powers of statement; it deals with the majesty of life, suggests the mystery of being, and thrills with every tender mood and noble impulse. It uses simple lines, as the letters of a word, with which to spell *dignity;*

it indicates gaiety with dancing colours, and haunting sadness with the sombre tones lurking where twilight almost kisses night.

As love may be likened to the fragrance and beauty of blossoms smiling on the fringed edges of a plant rooted in the dark and unlovely soil of primordial necessity, so may art be likened to a flower springing from basic needs, and supported by the very earth which nourishes all sociologic growth. The beauty of this flower puts *soul* into the emotions, *spirit* into the consciousness of humanity.

Man was emotional before he became rational; up to the present moment he remains far more emotional than he has ever grown to be rational. Art is almost purely emotive both in its expression and its reaction. Its end and aim are not given us to know,—possibly for the reason that it has neither end nor aim. If it has an end, the end must be infinitely remote. If it has an aim, its aim must be to give pleasure to the emotions; at least that must be its proximal purpose,—its more distal aim is veiled with some mystery related to the progress of the soul. With the Greeks, beauty was the aim of all the higher arts. In that "land of lost gods and godlike men," beauty was the broad avenue leading to the stately dome of pleasure.

Life, regarded as a parent-stem, has thrown out many branches. Where or at what period these branches leave the main trunk no one knows; how

they are related to one another beneath the bark, no one has ever dared to guess. Is life itself merely a branch? We cannot say. Does life support mind, or mind create life? We do not know. Are all these strange phenomena the merest twigs of a tree that man, since self-consciousness first opened his eyes, has called God? We do not know, and probably never shall; but if this wisdom awaits us, it will only be after consciousness shall have passed through a million cycles called *lives*, and been sublimated by a million and one interims called *deaths*.

Perhaps it is futile to wander so far afield. Emotion and reason, after all, may flow as one under the bark of the Tree. How can we tell when we are only vaguely conscious at best of a few small branches which are inextricably intertwined! Still, for present purposes we must regard them as separate, and treat them as such.

Let us assume that the art of painting is an emotional outlet which is appreciably self-creative possibly by subconscious suggestion; that it is governed by external form and colour which are transmuted into internal design and feeling; that it is subject to selective will in combination, and that it is influenced by the very material used in its technic; that these influences crystallize into canons which are ever in conflict with our æsthetic aspirations, and yet which are always striving, as it were, to serve our æsthetic requirements.

This art, germinated in light, is emotive and

ornamental. Its highest mission may be to discover the changeless spirit veiled by mutable forms for ever in flux and flow. Surely, it is neither a stupid missionary nor a wise schoolmaster,—since it has no direct lesson to teach and no proselyting to do; and yet it bears a message as does a symphony or a song; but no more than a lyric was it born to carry a burden.

When painting tries to supplement history it assumes a heavy load, for it usually confuses fact with fiction, and it often obscures truth with fantasy; when it essays portraiture, it is more than apt to caricature both body and soul,—which is a significant fact, for it points to heights still above the art. When it attempts to tell a story with a moral or to preach a sermon, it at once becomes absurd or drops into some of its late-primitive ideals. The decorative mural painting in fresco and other technic has achieved much, but it is still largely a field of promise. Still, painting persists, with no inconsiderable claim on art, in various illegitimate and uncongenial fields.

Millenniums may yet pass before this art shall find itself engaged wholly with its own problems in its own proper province. For nothing save truth is more persistent than error; and the inertia of habit is slow to yield. As Burke says: "The march of the human mind is slow." Even thousands of years of nobly directed effort may fail to rid painting of the disturbing coteries of freaks piddling in the shallow pools of art. "The little

foxes spoil the vines," said Solomon; and someone else, I think it was Plutarch, observed that if you live with a lame man you will learn to limp. Such is human nature; and after all, the art is not exalted so much by what is done as by that which it would do.

Nevertheless, a thin and straggling line of genuine artists, intelligently seeking the real province of painting, has persevered through the centuries of record. The line has often been broken or obscured; yet it was always capable of re-forming and of re-emerging from the darkness, each time a little fitter for the trail leading to bigger and better things.

"Labour is the price the gods have set upon everything excellent." Serious painters have always laboured patiently for that dexterity, the function of which is the fine expression of an intellectual conception having emotive values capable of giving pleasure through the eye. In their apprenticeship they acquired command of the manipulation of line, mass, and colour; they learned how to interpret the laws of light (and shade); that is to say, how to see; they achieved what Wordsworth called "the vision and the faculty divine"; and the most successful lyric painters discovered the knack of presenting just enough of the spirit of imitation to suggest a probability in the realm of possible nature.

The artist-painter therefore has found it advisable to seize upon some aspect of nature capable of

idealization without loss of semblance, or, may I say, capable of sustaining intensified semblance? He has been careful to utilize natural objects which lend themselves gracefully to the exactions of beauty, and through beauty to pleasure, without endangering the effect with the blemish of vacuity. If he uses objects of other arts, architectural for example, he makes them accessories to his own. Above all else, whatever he uses in nature, or in another art, he is careful to invest with an air of symbolism which is vital to his art. He avoids incoherency by the nice care which he bestows upon his symbolism. For if his symbolism is crude he introduces rawness into his work,—something parallel to slang in poetry; if his symbolism is arbitrary, it fails of meaning because the parts, like unknown hieroglyphics unable to sustain the continuous current of emotive expression, seem detached, inharmonious, and are therefore not understood; his work lacks "the living passion symbolled there." If his symbols are exotic and bizarre, they distract the attention and thus detract both from the pleasure of the eye and of the mind. At the same time, if his symbolism is over-realistic, or too exactly imitative, it becomes brutal or too cramped to convey a worthy conception or a deep emotion.

The painter has on all sides, everywhere and at all times, the objects which he may assemble to represent some phase of life or nature well worth depicting. But that which he has within his own

soul is of incomparably greater importance to the success of his picture than everything put together on the outside. Since artistic vision is multiphased, the artistic sense within must choose, and judgment, a sentient crystal of experience, must arrange with the greatest care the external objects which he is to symbolize and to weave together logically with the variegated warp peculiar to his art. The only trouble with all this is that God made the countryside, so to speak, while the average painter only happened. Still there is hope in the thought that, as Cowper says, even "a fool must now and then be right by chance."

It was thought by many at one time, and it is still believed by some, that almost anything is a paintable subject if the painter has sufficient mastery of technic, together with an engaging style. Nothing indeed in art is farther from the truth. No degree of technical skill can render a commonplace subject unique, or a contemptible one great. "No treatment," says the author of *Erewhon*, "can make a repulsive subject less repulsive. It can make a trivial, or even a stupid, subject interesting; but a really bad flaw in a subject cannot be treated out." This is as true of painting as in letters.

A similar truth applies to pictorial anatomy, commonly called composition. As the painter's poetic energy must find outlet through his palette and brush, he observes that structure is as necessary to his art as it is to poetry; that a disjointed

or gangling composition by no amount of technical nurture can ever be made to blossom into a fine picture. As well try to make Quasimodo assume the proportional graces of the Belvedere! In making a picture, one must always consider the end. Skill and labour spent on a faulty composition are thrown away in proportion to the fault in structure. And yet the composition, important as it is, occupies a small elemental place compared with the soul of the picture. For no arrangement of faultless attire even on an anatomically perfect corpse—neither pencilling of eyebrow nor painting of cheek—can inspire it with that indefinable expression which emanates only from life. The life—the soul—of a picture must come from the maker of that picture; and that is the solitary reason why we call the master painter a creator.

But neither will it suffice merely for the painter to put life into his work. Life manifests itself differently in different objects. Just as a pastoral spirit is incongruous in a metropolitan scene, so may lively gaiety destroy the artistic value of a tragic picture. The very pose of a figure, if contrary to the spirit of a scene, may entirely ruin a painting so far as its æsthetic worth is concerned. Its very tone is eloquent or blatant, impressive or frivolous. No painter of even mediocre ability would think of scattering, for instance, the wool-pack or cumulus clouds over the sky of *A Storm* when the trees are bent and straining and the voice of the wind is almost audible.

This illustration, it is true, represents only the A B C's of the art. An infinite number of degrees, subtle and elusive of words, rise above and ever beyond. They cannot be taught because they are inseparable attributes of genius. No one would think of trying to teach, let us say, "the sweet singer of Georgia" how to write a play equal to one of Shakespeare's, nor the "Arizonian 'poetess' of passion" how to compose a Lesbian Sapphic. Outside the advertisement of a "school of correspondence" such a thought would never arise.

Painting is oftener compared with the art of writing than with any other. If the repetition may be risked again, it may be assumed that whoever can write a letter can also write some sort of a book; that whoever can make the letter S can draw a serpent; and that whoever can daub can paint some sort of a picture; but, merely in itself, technical skill in writing is wholly incapable of producing fine literature; and, likewise, the technic of painting is only the means of expressing something; at its higher levels that *something* is the result of clearer and subtler mental operations dependent upon emotional range not only but upon intellectual grasp of experimental fact. Many can use the language of art, but what some of them say "is only a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

The thought that has value above all else in painting is the thought that is pictorially possible not only, but which may be expressed better with

the technic of painting than by any other means. This is the kernel of the nut as we modern folk regard it, although we sometimes forget that we are still living in a very remote antiquity.

Truth, as it concerns the painter, is the mastery of a series of relations existing in space; these relations embrace contour, form, colour, and position; we may call them objective. The sense of emphasis is a subjective trait that makes the artistic mastery of these relations possible. Then, the synthetic union of truth and beauty glorifies all these relationships into a harmony which sings a matin-song to the sleeping emotions, thus arousing the soul to intenser life or to a fuller sense of being. And until the painter effects this synthesis of truth and beauty, his many-sided art remains, on one side or another, imperfect.

The development of painting as an art appears to be of an order rigidly logical and climactic to a degree equalled only in mathematics. A representation of the relations of the first two dimensions proceeds primarily from accuracy of position and contour on a plane surface; then it passes through subtle processes involving emphasis until it extends to action or character. A representation of the third dimension brings into play delicate problems of illusion which vastly complicate the process. The expedients of linear and aërial perspective become necessary. Following the third comes one which may be called the æsthetic dimension. If this is not mastered, then the

mastery of the three primary dimensions is only tentatively artistic in that it is barren of the ideals of art, although it may be rich in mechanical grace and attractive in its geometric perfection.

Having assumed, for convenience of discourse, other than the three primary dimensions as necessary to the art of painting, it may be permissible to postulate emotional and purely intellectual dimensions. What seems to be overlapping, interweaving, and blending of relations between all these different dimensions, possible to the technic of painting, is really a climactic order, which in time may be reduced to a formula and denoted with symbols similarly to the writing of mathematical formulæ.

When the forms and colours of a painting bear to one another ordered relationships, an æsthetic element enters into the arrangement. When the arrangement is so ordered that the forms and colours combine into a whole while yet remaining distinct and in contrast, an added value is given to the pattern which usually enables it to address the emotions.

Mere resemblance is not regarded as art, or, at least, when it is so regarded it is classified under the most prosaic and monotonous forms of art. The paradoxical aspect of the matter is that intensified resemblance—the very essence of resemblance—is the most vital element in the higher and more poetic forms of painting. That is to say, resemblance must be intensified with accent and emphasis

in order to express character and to reveal what is ordinarily called *soul*.

The potential beauty of arrangement and pattern for pictorial composition everywhere existent is the source from which artistic inspiration is drawn. And the sole means of drawing this inspiration is through the reciprocal emotional and intellectual powers. The artistic representation of space, and the filling of it with the harmonious relationships of colour and form, of lines, masses, and tones, supported by arrangement, unified by pattern, and convincing in a resemblance which has been intensified by emphasis, all depend upon the mind, which must be able to see adequately, to feel sympathetically, and to execute efficiently. That is the art of painting in a nutshell—and without it painting is no art.

Naturally, technic plays an important part in artistic painting. Without the best technic art cannot rise to its highest levels. It is true that genius may achieve artistic effects of a high order with an inferior technic; and it is also true that the mediocre cannot accomplish a work of pure art with the most refined technic; yet neither fact is any part of an argument for slighting the best and most efficient technic thus far evolved.

It is possible, of course, for mediocre mentality, having facility in manual manipulation, to produce by chance a work of art. There is always this difference, however, between the accidental good effects of the ungifted and those of the gifted:

the mediocre cannot, or at least does not, profit by happy accidents; while his gifted brother, subject to the same fortuity, uses his happy accidents as steps to higher effects. Another very noticeable difference is in the ability of the gifted to utilize the work of others both in analytic and synthetic processes. As Emerson says, "in fact it is as difficult to appropriate the thoughts of others as it is to invent." The accomplishments of predecessors are the building-materials already quarried and hewed for the hands of the genius; while with the ungifted such materials serve no other purposes than those of the copyist.

At the dawn of the seventeenth century the modern art of painting had reached its complete evolution. Not that the art henceforth shall remain static; but with that consummation the attitude of the painter toward nature changed; his conception had broadened to embrace the democratic aspects of the world; and he found himself the master of space in its interminable recessions. He had learned to orient his art with regard to the entirety of his environment rather than to direct his efforts, as previously, toward certain elective parts. Instead of his selective faculties becoming dulled they grew to be more keen,—more artistically acute. He recognized differences in position and in the lighting of objects, all which he treated as accidental rather than as inherent gradations of true artistic value. He apprehended the real universality of beauty, know-

ing that it was everywhere within reach if one but have the eye, the wisdom, and the patience to seek the vantage-point of vision. He no longer looked for beauty in the things that were merely pretty, but on the contrary he often surprised it in unsuspected places. He knew at last that artistic painting is concerned primarily with things as they *seem*, and secondarily, if at all, with them as they *are;* that the artistic relations which combine things in beauty of form and which unite them with the magic of colour and which blend them with the witcheries of tone and which enchant them with all the subtle gradations of light and shade are more important to the pictorial effect than the realities of the things themselves regarded separately. This he understood to be the secret of breadth, in endless variety, of our modern painting; and this secret was first given to the painters of our era by the incomparable Rembrandt. Thus it is that a masterpiece in painting as judged by our modern standards is like a magic mirror which reflects fact, form, and colour not so much by definite statement as by that "judicious unfinish" which transmutes a flat surface into open and airy space.

As I have indicated, art is, among other things, an emotive statement. The Greeks made use of it at their best period to express beauty. On those grounds it has been criticized. That is no basis, however, for a criticism of Greek art. For if that art seems to rise above our present human ideals,—

if it seems to be detached from everyday existence,—the fault is in us and not in Greek art. When our civilization shall reach Hellenic heights, our ideals in art will also be to express beauty, and through beauty, by reaction, to arouse a keener feeling of pleasure in a nobler achievement.

Torn as our civilization is by the savagery of war,—menaced as it is by soulless efficiency,—shocked as it is by a powerful, wanton people who are barbarous at heart but whose heads have worn royal crowns of light,—yet, in these early years of the twentieth century, there are millions of human beings who see clearly that an ugly motif has no birthright and no excuse for being,—nothing to recommend it to perpetuity in any field of æsthetics. Taste is no more inclined to admit disgusting subjects in art than in polite society. The drawing-room and the board rightly exclude nastiness however nicely presented. The civilized family circle has its well-known prohibitions. Painting should be, and indeed is, as careful of the sensible proprieties as is society or the fireside.

CHAPTER III

A THEORY OF PAINTING[1]

LIFE is a phenomenon and Art is one of its corollaries. As is notably true of Time and Poetry, neither Art nor Life has ever been satisfactorily defined. Both are so obvious, however, that a definition is unnecessary. The relationship that exists between them is commonly acknowledged, but not always clearly perceived.

There is a general agreement in the belief that the phenomena of Life are incidental to planetary change; and that Art is incidental to certain evolutionary phases of these phenomena. Perhaps if Art and Life are considered with relation to each other, our conceptions will broaden and our perception of them will become clearer even without the aid of definitions.

It is possible that Art may be traced through its changing phases as far back as the flux of Life itself may be followed. Indeed, some of our most modern art exhibits a hairy kinship with prearboreal existence. But, as we prefer to enter Life's Sanctuary through the soul of the most

[1] *Art-Talks with Ranger.*

spiritual person rather than through the primitive cell, so also should we approach Art's Temple from the heights, and not from its primordial depths.

For the purpose of spiritual orientation, man assumes that there is a God. If he would make measurements on a boundless prairie he must drive a peg somewhere. On a shoreless sea he must sight some star. Such are the assumptions of philosophy.

We may assume, therefore, that Life moves horizontally through time, and that Art moves perpendicularly; that one leaves a linear trail—the other, vertical signs. But we must not assume identity where there is only similarity, because the confusion of identity with similarity has been the basis of a world of trouble to human thought. Parallel lines, corollary phenomena, and similar phases have interfered more with the sequence of deduction and the logic of formulation than all the known lines of intersection and all the balancing forces of opposing phenomena put together.

Leaving out for the moment the many different kinds of art, and considering only painting, no difficulty is found in separating Art from Life. This is the first step in the formulating of a working hypothesis which shall not be too slippery to lead us toward that which we wish to approach. The next step is a pause. For it is as necessary to avoid a false lead as it is to follow a true one.

A little thought, then, is soon followed by the conclusion that this particular art is not an expres-

sion of life or character; neither is it a guide to the intellect nor an exemplar of ethics. At most it is one of the many languages of Life. Yet it is only a language in so far as it is a medium through which emotion finds the comfort of expression, and the intellect a kind of loafing ease.

The æsthetic feeling, of which this art is a symbol, is a phenomenon which proceeds as a branch from the tree of Life. Its leafage has changed many times through the long epoch of its existence; and its buds have borne strange fruitage, as well they might, since they have passed through the vicissitudes of the various seasons of the soul. But the æsthetic longing—the feeling—the branch, however bare at times of leaf, or barren of fruit, or bizarre of blossom, never withered. Thus, what was artistic in one age and inartistic in another is of no vital importance. For this is the one aspect of Painting—and the only one—which is permanent and universal.

So far as the mind, an imperfect instrument unsuited to many tasks, has penetrated the Mysteries, it has revealed to us that Life itself is of changeless function, and wholly outside the pale of evolution; and that only do the combinations change to which Life, in one way or another, is related and involved.

Thus, that which directs the evolution of this art is precisely similar to, if not exactly identical with, that which governs both organic and relational evolution. But the evolution of Painting

is very different from the æsthetic principle on which it depends—as different as the body is from its life, or as muscle is from mind.

The art is something infinitely more than the painting of that which is paintable. For it must endow the paintable with emotions, as it were, that are common to all mankind—emotions that all men feel and know and *live*, and in some form or degree express. And the more richly it charges the canvas with these emotions, the higher it rises as an art; until, in the hands of a master, it reveals such subtle and noble qualities that if I were to personify the art of Painting, I should call it one of the blessed ambassadors of God charged to convey the greetings of Beauty to the wistful eye of man.

The æsthetic element of Painting is as much outside the phase of evolution as its parent, Life. From Apelles to Titian, from Titian to Inness, and from Inness back to the Aurignacian artists of the stone age of Europe, twenty or thirty thousand years ago, the soul of this art remains exactly the same: changeless, serene, and sane and great as a demiurgic god. And if all the painter breed were "killed off" today by some happy chance, and all their works destroyed tomorrow, and all record of their methods burned the day after, yet within a century or two the art would again be in flower.

And the reason why this art could not be exterminated, as many species have been, and as some so-called arts have been, is because it is a corollary

to the phenomenon of Life—because its soul is continually vibrant to human consciousness: librating with longing—quivering with joy and hallowed with memory sweet or sad.

The sensations born of experience, in the general run of mankind, are absorbed and dispersed in everyday cares and by the necessities of maintenance. The average person uses up his high moods in crossing the hollows of life. Sentiment harnessed to business affairs is like a race-horse hitched to a plough: the spirit of speed must be transmuted into a pull—nervous mettle must go into muscle. But give the average person a holiday in a picture gallery, and his high moods come back in a measure, just as the race-horse indulges in frolic bursts of speed when turned loose in a pasture.

The artist-painter is the race-horse preserved from the plough for speed and speed alone, as it were. His moods are higher, his emotions stronger, and his intuitions deeper, and his facility of expression suppler and all his desires of expression more imperative than those of the average run of men. Thus it is that he differs from the others of his ordinary fellows a little more or less in degree, but not at all in kind or substance. If it were otherwise, there would be neither incentive nor demand for his pictures. He would no sooner paint for a blind world than would the Beethovens compose symphonies for the stone-deaf. The mystery of his genius is no greater than the mystery of mood in the humblest folk. There is nothing more

miraculous in his inspiration than in the desire of the shepherd boy to blow music from hollow reeds.

The painter thrills with the pastoral or other beauty of a scene, and strives to pass the thrill on to others by the means of his art; the poet feels a like thrill and tries to pass it on in words, according to his art; the musician feels the same and attempts the similar in melody; the average man feels the same sensations; but instead of trying to pass them along to others, he *feeds* upon them, and thus *lives* moments that are dramatic or epic or lyric.

That is to say, the temperament of one person inclines him so to apprehend the past in the present that he is conscious only of the past; the temperament of another tends to revel in dreams of the future to the exclusion of the conscious present; and of another to find his high moods in the sublimated exuberance of the present moment, being wholly oblivious to the past and the future.

Now, when the painter's emotion is limited to the nascent joy of the moment his soul becomes, so to speak, a conscious point in time, synchronizing with the ever-fleeting present moment. Work done in this mood is called lyrical. He captures the transitory experience in such a way that it may arouse in others a similar mood. He takes an evanescent wraith of the moment and sends it on through other minds as a dancing sprite of the years.

A good deal depends upon how he deals with the emotion: whether he sets it down on his canvas as ascending the curve of rhythm, or congeals it at the crest, or plasters it on the descending slope. If he indicates it as rising he will enable his work to arouse in sensitive souls a sensation similar to the vague dreams of wooing love. If he paints it at the crest, he imparts to it something of the supreme passion; but if he places the soul of his art's subtlety on the rhythm's downward curve, he must inevitably anticipate by some shadow of suggestion that mood which follows a dying joy. And nothing else in his art is so eloquent to the initiated as this placement of his emphasis. It is not only a standard with which to appreciate one phase of his character, but it also tells in some measure what his past has been; and it augurs spiritually somewhat of his future. And it does this because his conscious mind takes no part in the process. It is an act of his subconscious nature, and therefore true—true in the noblest sense, because it is adjusted to all the facts and experiences of his being.

The painting which best fixes the transitory moment is the most lyric in character. Twinkling leaves, swaying boughs, running water or dimpled pools, happy poise of cloud, graceful pose of kine, and just enough haze in the air to veil the distance with mystery, and just enough gold to tell the story of the sun—these, and such fugitive things, are the lyrics of the open world. They are the

coquetry of Nature—the perpetual delight and the persistent teasers of the landscapist.

The very nature of Painting saves it from the usual defects of Poetry, its sister art. In lyric painting the emotion is either caught or missed. For pigments, unlike words, will not easily permit the high mood of the moment to degenerate into a moral, or to overflow into a reminiscence, or to rise into a formless and variegated cloud-bank of prophetic postulate. This is what trips up many a "Tonalist." He wooes glaze, wins colour, and loses emotion. He courts scumble, wins softness, and loses his way homeward in swamps of mush and deserts of haze. His work is fated to be forgotten.

There is a nervous quality in the lyric painting which stands for two things: a personal element peculiar to the artist, and the sincerity of his feelings. This nervous quality, so often obscured by, and lost in, the methods of the Tonalist, cannot be simulated. The pen of the clever poet may render an affectation almost as convincing as a real emotion; but no amount of cleverness can accomplish this disguise with the brush of a painter.

It follows, therefore, that the really successful painter must put down his emotions at their high tide regardless of everything else; such, for instance, as the fitness or congeniality of the times, the requirements of his age, the vogue of his colleagues, public taste, etc. He may safely trust to time for sympathy and a just valuation if his

contemporaries fail him in appreciation. Besides, what more should any painter ask than the privilege of starving to death with a sublime faith in the future glory of his work!

In the painter's art, the secret of the lyric lies in emphasis. When the emphasis dances on the flashing stream of fleeting moments in such a way as to remain always in the present, we have the ideal lyric. But when the emphasis lingers in the past, the lyric qualities of the work live in the shadows, while the dramatic are uppermost in the highlights and strong in the half-tones. And the secret of emphasis lies in the artist's temperament. In this relation, "artistic temperament" has real meaning. Thus the painter places his emphasis strictly according to his attitude toward Life at the moment when his work takes on soul—that is to say, when its smiling harmony is born of his intuition. This very relationship between Art and Life has led many a commentator far afield.

In Painting, the lyric demands sincerity of feeling, and the dramatic, seriousness. There is no intermingling of comedy and tragedy in the drama of this art as in that of Literature. For no matter how men and times may differ as to what is serious in life, no one would ever think of mistaking the tragic elements of a painting, as expressed in tone and form, for the elements of comedy. It is true that many a picture has been intended as tragic, and was believed to be tragic by the painter, when it was merely grotesque or comic. Religious

pictures without end have been produced of this nature; but they never fooled the rational mind. They were always just as ridiculous to common-sense as they are at present.

In Painting as in Literature, and more in Painting than in Poetry, lyric qualities necessarily pervade the dramatic. The language of the two arts is not the same. For its efficiency in expressing thought and feeling, one depends on the logic of sound-symbol—on the proper sequence of the flowing stimuli of words, phrases, pause, and stress. The other depends upon fixed relations carefully adjusted between lines, lights, masses, shadows, colours, tones, etc., and the relationship of opposites, the balancing of which forms subtle emphasis in harmony, or the lack of balancing, a discord.

Dramatic painting then may be highly lyrical so long as the emphasis is on the past; and the epic may be lyrical so long as the accent is on the future. However, the epic qualities are less evident in Painting than in Poetry, where they are scarce enough. The cause of this difference appears to be inherent in the language of the two arts rather than in the nature of the two artists. Both painter and poet, at times, ride the crests of supremely optimistic moods, from the heights of which destiny appears glorious against the splendid dawn which hopeful man in his imagination calls the Future. But faith in destiny is harder to express in the language of Painting than in the "pæans" of the poet.

A few religious paintings have been mildly epic in character; some have been superb enough to arouse vague sensations of the supreme will. And a few—a very few—historic paintings have been great enough to awaken the sensation of a predestined future inexorably linked with a fated past.

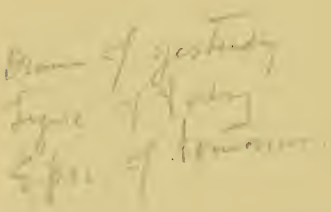
Perhaps the best epic painting that the world of Art has known was done during the pre-Alexandrian period. And so far as may be surmised at this time, Timanthes of Cythnus imbued his *Sacrifice of Iphigenia* with supreme epic qualities. It would be difficult to conceive a greater majesty —a more imperial doom—than was shadowed in the epic grandeur of that picture which has come down to us only in fragmentary descriptions.

The anthropomorphic conception of destiny was more favourable to the epic expression in Art perhaps than we are prone to think at this time. It is true that instead of the minor Greek divinities, and later "celestial personages," we have other arbiters of the future. These are no less imperious because far more reasonable. Behold the dreams of Feminism, the splendours of Eugenics, the promises of Evolution, and the wisdom of Pragmatism! But where are the prophets?

Still, persons are living today who see a gestating divinity in our labouring race. Among such prospective, optimistic souls there must be artists whose high moods scan the future with the eye of faith. And out of the drama of yesterday and

the lyric of today, who shall say that Art will not weave with confidence her epic tapestries of to-morrow? Surely, the prophets of the soul must address us in the language of Painting even as in that of Poetry.

The art of Painting is restless as wind and tide; it is ever agitated with endeavour, and pregnant with hope; it symbolizes something that is kin to Life—something, in itself, that is changeless; yet something that seems to have spiritual needs and æsthetic ideals—something that helps to reveal man to himself—something that illuminates his moods and sanctifies his work—and thus approves his struggles in the glorification of his aspirations



CHAPTER IV

THE ORIGIN OF PAINTING

RECENT investigation has pushed the social life of man so far back into antiquity that it is futile to try to locate the origin of this art or to attempt to follow accurately its great cycles. There is an element in it that is kin to all the centuries in the sea. The geologist has found traces of man's very early artistic instinct; but these signs, like dim footprints in the sands, do not lead to the beginning. The unknown past has dropped its impenetrable veil; what is beyond the mists can only be surmised by the broadest of anthropological studies and by the cleverest of generalizations founded on what is known as *primitive* art.

As a branch of the art of ornamentation, painting is referred to in the fourteenth verse of the twenty-second chapter of Jeremiah: "ceiled with cedar, and painted with vermilion." Jeremiah, however, was of yesterday when considered in relation with this ancient art. How long it took man to learn to "muse on Nature with a poet's eye" will never be known.

Although the commencement of social phe-

nomena will probably for ever remain in the shifting, uncertain realm of speculation, it may be reasonably assumed that the art of painting evolved from one of the branches into which primitive speech divided; that is to say, from writing. Even Egyptian painting which, comparatively speaking, flourished but yesterday, not only shows its kinship to writing but, thanks to the priestcraft! never progressed very far beyond the stage of hieroglyphic embellishment; for it was woven of weak and beggarly elements.

It is likely that the earliest human speech was less lingual than manual, gestural, and guttural; that the medium of communication, at first, was one of signs, and later of signs and sounds; that the signs were made with limbs which were freest and easiest to use for such purposes, namely, the hands and arms; that the facial muscles spoke in terms of grimace; that gesture was supplemented by posture; that movements of legs and head helped to make more intelligible those of the hands; and that guttural sounds or grunts made clearer the meaning of signs; that the tongue came into use first through the hiss; and that as the economy of its employment became apparent to beings who were forced more or less continually to use their arms and legs in pursuit of food, as well as in defence and flight, the tongue was brought oftener into play until it became such a valuable organ of communication that speech was named after it and called *language*. Imitation must have been the

key to this early speech; need must have fashioned the key and necessity taught its use.

Drawing, an important element in the art of painting, may have emerged from the act of the primitive geniuses who first thought of scratching in the ground to convey information to one another about some wild beast whose most obvious attribute was the possession of claws, and whose most dreaded trait was the power to use them. For the rule is that utility shall precede art. It may be supposed, then, that the origin of drawing was in the crude signs which served a useful purpose; that they were traced in sand and soft earth, scratched on the bark of trees, on stones, bones, and skins. The next step might have been a filling in of the crude design with a smear of coloured earth. The star of the unconquered will had risen.

Early in the same epoch of development the smearing of the body, the colouring of skeletons, and the daubing of leaky vessels to make them water-tight may have been further steps which led in the direction of painting as an æsthetic art.

As language developed and split into branches, the usefulness of some signs diminished while the utility of others increased. The birth of the symbol must have occurred during this indefinite era. The idea of drawing had become fixed in the mind of man. The hand had learned to express ideas. Thus the partnership of brain and hand, whether formed by chance or fate, had received the sign manual of evolution. This partnership was indis-

pensable to human progress. And so, when certain kinds of drawing no longer served a utilitarian need they turned to æsthetic necessity. For man's æsthetic nature, however crass, had begun to demand environal ornamentation as the next successive link to personal ornamentation which had been fashioned perhaps by sexual selection.

Thus, "where the dead red leaves of the years lie rotten," pictorial drawings probably came into definite being, first at the behest of utility, and, through successive stages, finally in answer to emotional craving. From ideographic drawings to pictorial painting was only a step in the art; but it was a step which no doubt covered a long period of time. Outlines smeared with coloured earths or other substances, such as gums and grease stained with vegetable and animal pigments, or the natural oxides of minerals, were the masterpieces of the earliest painters. Eventually came the refinements of light and shade, the dance of colours and the song of tone, the illusions of luminosity and perspective, and at last all the other problems which are engaging the attention of painters today.

A very casual observer of social progress cannot fail to be impressed with the great length of time necessary to the development of an art. If, therefore, pictorial art was well established in a remote period, such as the stone age, the earlier forms of art must have appeared in an almost unthinkable antiquity. Moreover, when one re-

flects on the slow growth of any art and on the tedious changes which cause it to ebb and flow and pass away only to be reborn in after ages and to rise again crest-high through favourable conditions, one must assume that the history of social man on earth is, at best, only slightly apprehended by us of today, and that it can be seen for only a little way from our immediate shores.

CHAPTER V

PREHISTORIC PAINTING

PAINTING, with several of its sisters, seems to have appeared and disappeared in very early times only to reappear among other peoples at distant places. The universality of the art would lead us to suspect this even if there were no other evidence.

The instincts of the child suggest the instincts of the childhood of the race. The fact that all children like to "make pictures" is an indication that draughtsmanship was one of the earliest of games. The imitative faculty of man is doubtless a factor in the origin of art. The first attempts at the drawing of animals and at portraiture, being an identical process, were crude outlines. When the enclosed space was filled in with dark earth or natural tar the silhouette was produced.

One of the most astonishing discoveries of recent times was made in the caves of Altamira in northern Spain. Reputable archæologists believe that a people known as Aurignacians produced the paintings found on the walls of these caves. The bold spirit, technical skill, and general excellence

of the execution of these prehistoric works might well stagger the pride of some of our modern painters. If the painting was done, as it is believed, in the paleolithic age of Europe, it must be in the neighbourhood of thirty thousand years old.

M. Émile Cartailhac and the Abbé Henri Breuil, in their illustrated and now famous book called *La Caverne d' Altamira*, contend that the Aurignacians were richly gifted with artistic feeling and that they were capable of admirable work; that they were clever draughtsmen who did excellent freehand imitation of nature, which they had learned to apprehend with true artistic vision; that they had a considerable knowledge of colours which they ground in mortars or on flat stones and which they mixed with bone-marrow and preserved in marrow-bones; that they used varicoloured crayons; and that they employed brushes in the laying on of pigments and in the blending of tones; that they understood modelling and the use of the burin, or graving tool, as well as of the palette; and that some of the colours which they certainly used were the natural oxides, yellow and red ochres, and the black oxide of manganese. The authors believe that the Aurignacian artists also understood ivory-carving, low relief-work in stone; and that they were able to represent the human figure as cleverly as they drew the forms of beasts.

Many thousands of years have passed since the

bison roamed the region of the Pyrenees. Perhaps a hundred thousand years were necessary for the stalagmite formation to build the barrier-wall in the cave of Audoubert behind which Count Bégouen discovered clay models of the male and female bison. As this wall had to be broken away to afford access to the gallery, and as it is highly probable that the paleolithic sculptor modelled only such animals as were familiar, and therefore contemporaneous with himself, it must be assumed that art, to reach the high development shown by these models, had a very early origin.

If it is true, as someone has said, that human savages roamed the wildernesses of Europe for two hundred and fifty thousand years without sense enough to invent a syllable of speech, we must modify considerably our Scriptural notions of the antiquity of our race. The truth is that man is an old resident of the habitable world; and the probability is that he has been doing intermittent work in art of a creditable kind during a very much longer period than we suspect. Possibly there is no problem in the art of our time that has not been repeatedly solved in eras past.

There is little doubt that prehistoric man had both time and energy for play. During the epoch of his pristine virility it is probable that his playful moods were dominant. And although Tragedy was the *sage-femme* who first held him in her arms and the constant companion who was last to close his eyes, Sorrow had not yet taken possession of his

soul. The spirit of play was his salvation,—the first *Salvator Mundi.* It laid its finger upon his crude utilitarian workmanship, and inspired it with an æsthetic joy. This same spirit of play turned work into craft and craft into art. It probably influenced the earliest development of music, poetry, and dancing. At all events, the effect of play on the origin of the graphic arts is recognized by students. And if we make all reasonable allowances for all the differences between contemporary primitive groups and those of prehistoric times, this phenomenon still remains constant to both.

A study of the art of Europe during the post-glacial period reveals many probabilities and not a few startling facts. There are relics of these early drawings which show that the artists of that time saw the objects in nature as adequately as the artists of today see them. It is evident, however, that the prehistoric artist could not portray as adequately as he saw, which is not strange when one considers his technic and tools. And contrary to a prevailing impression, it is more than likely that artists were not born as such in that dim and savage day any more than they are in this; but that they were taught and that they were guided by standards which persisted long and were stubborn.

One naturally wonders what must be the genesis of an art that had standards so long ago! Another interesting fact is that the art of these earliest

known primitives is superior to, more spirited and more "modern" in a way, than nearly all the art of our contemporary primitive groups. Moreover, it is evident that there were the same differences between the earliest primitives as between the artists of later and historic times.

The widely current and common notion that individuals of a primitive people show less diversity of talent, greater equality of gift, and more uniform characteristics and capabilities than do the individuals of more civilized groups, is probably almost directly opposed to fact. It is likely that in very early primitive times there were greater relative differences between artists themselves and between artists and laymen than there were at the best period of Greek art when civilization had reached its crest and apex on earth in historic times.

It is reasonable to suppose, and many correlated facts justify the assumption, that the early prehistoric or primitive maker of implements at first was impelled by need; and that later he was guided by intuition. That is to say, the earliest bludgeons, for example, were unadorned. They were picked up at random and discarded recklessly; only the most suitable were retained for further use. In time they were more carefully selected; knots were smoothed; the handle-end was shaped according to need and polished by wear and eventually with forethought. At this time personal ownership had become well established. Then a stone was

attached to one end of the bludgeon with withes, thongs of hide or of sinew. In the course of time, the stone was fashioned to suit the purpose of its use: edges were chipped for cutting; the poll was blunted for hammering, and so forth. Finally a metal axe took the place of the stone; and when thongs were no longer needed to hold axe and helve together, the thongs were represented with scratches, grooves, inlay, or relief, and thus became a motif for decoration.

This early form of the decoration of implements is autographed by the spirit of play; and it records also the transitional stage of artisan becoming artist. When the makers began to play with their work, they had already hearkened to an inner voice that we call intuition. Something within them also cried for symmetry; the idea of balance began to germinate. As I have said, motifs were taken from the crossed withes and the twisted thong, and passed down the ages until their origin was lost through slow modification and mixed design.

It is tolerably clear that ornamental art springs from two important sources: first, the material used develops the technic, and the technic originates the motif. The motif persists; it is transferred to other material which in turn develops a totally different technic as, for example, from that of basketry to pottery and wood-carving; from the technic of rope-work to that of metal-work. The second source of this art may be traced to the play in which the workman shows

mastery over *métier*. Thus play develops æsthetic values unconsciously and therefore creates without purpose. And it follows that styles of work differ according to the different ways of handling the same material in different parts of the world. The *motor habits* also differ noticeably among different tribes and produce variation even in the manner in which the arrow is released from the bow. On the whole, however, purely geometrical designs in primitive art-work are found to be similar; this is true in the most widely separated regions, which indicates that technic is fundamental to motif and that design is governed by the material used.

The same principle may be observed in the making and decorating of knife-blades; but it is most marked in the geometrical designs of basketry and of weaving. The nature of the material first guided the hands of the workman, and then gave the cue to the artist. Thus arose geometric design and various artistic motifs which in time were transferred from basketry and textile work to pottery, carving in wood, stone, and bone, and now and then wrought into metal. Broadly speaking, this is the process of evolution of one form of art, not by any means unrelated to the others.

Painting, as I have intimated, found its inspiration in playful imitation. Pleasure was found in utilitarian work. This was a very early means of satisfying an æsthetic longing, or hunger of in-

tuition. From a purely utilitarian imitation—such as useful signs scratched on soft surfaces to convey information—came a playful imitation of objects, crude caricatures, and finally the pictorial art which has reached its purest form in the lyric landscape "where Nature's heart beats strong amid the hills."

Just as the geometric design was governed by material and technic of manufacture; and just as it was modified by mixed forms and conflicting technics when transferred to wholly different material,—so was the purely imitative art of the primitives constrained by a two-dimensional plane. The draughtsmen in trying to represent objects having three dimensions, evolved grotesque combinations and characteristics.

Again, as the religious importance of art grew, its pictorial value suffered in proportion. This is evident not only among primitive groups where imitation frequently degenerates into the diagrammatic and symbolic, as shown in fetish signs, but also in the art of a people as highly developed as were the early Egyptians.

In prehistoric painting, as in other arts of the period, the motifs were not uniform, and the artistic finish seems accidental or according to the technic required by the material. The æsthetic principle seems secondary in time to the spirit of play in the maker at work. But perhaps back of the spirit of play in the early stages of art is a dim æsthetic longing as mysterious and as far

away in its beginning as the thing we call life, itself.

As to the primitive pigments, they were the natural earths, chalks, charcoal, and ochres. These afforded the earliest painters an effective palette: white, yellow, red, green, and brown, possibly blue. Very little preparation of the pigments was required, and the technic of their application might be described as flat smears filling crude outlines. These pictures naturally were not very durable. Innumerable masterpieces must have perished more than fifty thousand years ago,—a fact no doubt of some consolation to a few of our modern painters.

CHAPTER VI

EARLY PAINTING. I.—EGYPTIAN

ANYTHING like the precise antiquity of Egyptian painting remains unknown. The prehistoric Egyptians, as is usual among hunter tribes, developed accuracy of observation with keenness of vision and deftness of hand. The paleolithic nomad came as near being a "born artist" as ever happens. His neolithic successor may have outstripped him in devising the utilitarian means of comfort, but he rarely ever equalled him as an artist.

The Egyptian aborigines probably first used pigments for personal decoration. Men and women painted their bodies respectively red and yellow. It is believed that the custom persisted a very long time, during which it became modified with the use of zigzag lines, the drawings of animals and of symbolic designs. At a later period, tattooing often took the place of painting; and powdered malachite was used for the green crescents which were put under the eyes. Their palettes were carved with the images of beasts, often done in relief. Their pictures included many varieties,

such as representations of boats, temples, mountains, trees, human figures, and the forms of brutes. The later bas-reliefs arose from these early paintings.

Religion, and a belief in the magic power of imagery, had impressed their art many centuries before the dynastic epoch. Nevertheless, the prehistoric artist was evidently a seeker after truth and a serious student of Nature; for his work has a certain charm of direct realism which indicates that his primary object was to represent Nature as simply and sincerely as possible.

According to Petrie, the prehistoric period of Egyptian art extended from about 8000 to 5800 B.C. The remains of tomb frescoes and of implements, such as stone palettes and mullers, have been carefully studied. The pigments which have been found are powdered malachite, the natural earths, not very well refined, red cinnabar, and copper carbonate which gave them their blue used in the glazing of utensils.

It is worthy of note that the manifestation of realism in the art of this early people is in striking contrast with the rigid and formal style of "classic" times. One was the art of the people, and the other of the rulers. One breathed a little of freedom, while the other was restrained and slavish. The later sociologic period imbued art with commemorative characteristics, and drew it to the tomb, temple, and palace; it became absorbed in mystic hieroglyphics and majestic symbols of

fixed and conventional forms which left little to individual expression or interpretation. Some particular trait of an object was selected to express an abstract idea; for example: a drawing of a dog stood for vigilance; that of a horse for swiftness, and so forth. This mode of expression developed into a complex system of hieroglyphic writing, which was very largely used to convey or to conceal religious dogmas. The purely ornamental motif was lacking; and nothing has been discovered indicating a transitional stage between the realism of prehistoric times and the formal or hierarchal art of the "old kingdom." This has led to the theory that Egyptian classic art was a Chaldæan importation. The theory is not unreasonable, since we know that in very early times Egypt not only traded with other nations but was a fountain-head of artistic ideas, especially to younger civilizations. Some of the oldest Grecian architecture and designs bear the stamp of Egyptian influence; this is particularly noticeable in the old Doric column. It is reasonable to assume that Egypt borrowed as well as lent.

In historic times, painting has been traced back many centuries before our era. Pliny says that the Egyptians claim to have invented this art at least six thousand years before it passed into Greece. He adds: "Their vanity and lying are well known." Nevertheless, their earliest tombs, temples, mummies, monuments, and papyri bear clear evidence of the art, which, it is true, never

developed to any worthy degree. Sculpture and architecture were dominant. Painting was employed principally to adorn with colour their hieroglyphics, outlines, and bas-reliefs; and that use of the art was continued in the ornamentation of their later statues, columns, and architecture.

Pigments were laid on in flat masses; and it is generally agreed among students that the Egyptian painters never blended their colours. The bluish-green, now and then found on their antiquities, is merely a faded copper-blue; analysis has shown no trace of cobalt. Their two shades of blue were made of copper oxides slightly charged with iron. The reds, with which flesh was represented, were of two kinds, brownish and brick-coloured: mixtures of iron-rust and lime. Some difference of opinion exists as to the composition of their green; but chemists who have studied the subject seem to think that a transparent vegetal yellow was used with a copper-blue, probably superposed as a glaze in a gum medium rather than mixed with the mineral. There is little doubt that their yellow was a vegetal derivative, semi-transparent, bright and pure as the colour of sulphur. Black, it is thought, was obtained from wine lees, soot, and burnt pitch, and their white from gypsum. Madder was used for the dyeing of mummy cloths, and perhaps for other purposes. But their madder lake, unlike the modern, was an opaque pigment. Just how they prepared it is unknown; but it has been reproduced

in modern times by boiling the madder root with gypsum and a small percentage of lime. Some chemists believe that alum was used as a mordant or fixing agent. Whatever the means may have been, the small particles of gypsum received a fixed stain of the vegetal extract. The modern method differs in that the base has a low index of refraction, making the colour, when diluted with a medium and applied as a glaze, more or less transparent. It is probable that in addition to yellow lake, made from *Carthamus tinctorius*, orpiment was used. As to varnish, its properties were known and made use of in the nineteenth and twentieth dynasties (1300 B.C.).

Egyptian artists, with slight variation of method, painted indifferently on various substances, such as hard and soft stone, wood, linen, plaster, and papyrus; but they lacked the facility to make ornamentation simple, and the artistic power to co-ordinate parts with reference to the whole. Indeed, they never went much beyond the assembling of parts, apparently unconscious of the spirit of unity. There was virtually no progression in their art. As Plato said: "The pictures and statues made ten thousand years ago are in no particular better or worse than they now make." It was only in painting that they took the slightest liberty with prescribed formalism—now and then suggesting perspective in the position of their figures. If they had any real notion of perspective, or any idea of the spirited imitation of Nature,

it was smothered by conventionalities prescribed by the priesthood, a caste which dominated art and, at one time, nearly everything else. The artists did, however, have distinct conceptions of colour harmony, the laws of which they seem to have understood. As draughtsmen, they were successful in contours and in the seizing of variety, especially that which indicated racial differences; and besides, they drew birds with remarkable cleverness. The few caricatures which survive make it plain that the Egyptians had a sense of humour. Composition and foreshortening were unknown. Marked distinctions were made in features and costumes, but individual characterization was neglected. As said before, painting and drawing were little more than hieroglyphic writing, which changed form very slowly,—even then owing to fashion rather than to individual initiative. As a picture could only be produced according to canon, deviations were rarely countenanced. If the king were represented, he must be larger than other members of the group. It was the law also that face, legs, and feet should be drawn in profile with shoulders and torso in full face.

The ideal of Egyptian art, best expressed in architecture, was sombre and laden with the majesty and mystery of life; its emotive elements were frozen,—as rigid and lifeless as the mummy,—and therefore poor liberators of energy. This was the very antithesis of the Greek ideal which embraced

beauty and was, consequently, inclined to be lively and joyous.

The Egyptian method of laying colour on stone is interesting. First, the surface was prepared with a smooth stratum of white plaster, composed of lime and gypsum; then the surface was highly polished; over this was passed a thin lime-white-wash; and on this the painting was done. Several vehicles are known to have been employed, such as glue, wax, and varnish. It is believed that the more skilful artists finished their work with a gummic glaze. In painting on wood, the coat of plaster was omitted; the whitewash was applied directly, on which the colours, suspended in glue-water, were laid with brushes. Virtually, the same method was used in painting on mummy cloth and papyrus; but the upper-class sarcophagi were treated with a technic which was much more elaborate and complicated.

First and last, the Egyptians produced a great variety of paintings,—all characterized by a lack of emotive energy. The reason for this has been seen; and we no longer set these people apart in our minds as a strange and anomalous race. In that which we call human nature, they differed in no essential from ourselves. The Egyptian scribe represented with his pencil behind his ear might, to all appearances, be a modern account-ant. As to municipal affairs, they were up-to-date, even in all the devious ways of graft. Their emotions were thoroughly "human"; their hopes

and dreams were ours; their attitude toward natural phenomena was that of the rest of the world; their efforts at understanding phenomena differed in no material manner from the efforts of the rest of mankind which have given us the fine arts, the religions, and the exact sciences. In art, however, and especially in the branch of painting, their emotive energy was suppressed or, rather, absorbed by the greater emotive energy of their religion, liberated, as it were, through the canals of canon in lieu of the freedom and grace found in flowing streams. As there is only a certain amount of emotive energy available to any person or people, if it is liberated in one way it cannot be let loose in another.

Thus, under the imperial sway of the priest-craft, emotional expression in the art of painting was not only still-born but already embalmed at birth. At the same time, the æsthetic nature of this people was too vital to bury this mummy of their emotions even at the behest of powerful priests sustained by an imperial organization and representing a multitude of gods.

And so through many centuries this art grew by accretion, so to say; the mummy was slightly modified as winding-cloths were added or removed. Still, the resurrection day never came. The vital spark of emotion was never fanned into the flame of art to go "glimmering through the dream of things that were." Scenes representing phases of the civil and military life of their people were as

dead in spirit as the central idea of their funeral pictures. Neither was there any life in the pictures drawn from ceremonial and religious functions, nor from the domestic pursuits and vocations, such as farming, fishing, and marketing; nor yet in those taken from the avocations and sports, such as hunting, dancing, and gymnastics. All through their paintings was the spirit of "the sad vicissitude of things," with no hint of the fervent beauty dancing like a glad flame. Their pictures of gardens, ponds, markets, fish, and fruit-trees are scarcely more vital than their hieroglyphics. While in portraiture, efforts were nearly always confined to profile, which may have reached some degree of proficiency: perhaps individual characteristics of distinguished personages were more or less well suggested in outline from forehead to chin; and now and then some spirit is shown in battle-scenes; but in general it is negligible and of small account when considered as an art.

In the early centuries, the Egyptians employed painting chiefly to illustrate events; but the motif changed as their art intermingled with that of Assyria and Judea. It may have received some slight impetus and a mild form of energy from the Assyrians and the Jews which tended to lift it above the highest levels hitherto attained by native artists. Still it remained far below the later flights made by art in other lands. The Assyrian influence, at first, could have done little

more than enlarge the Egyptian models; although in some of their very earliest work the Assyrians achieved the indefinable charm of a style all their own. Jewish art concerned itself principally with richer materials on which to use, for the most part, its borrowed designs.

No art grows by itself alone; it must be nourished by the others, and it must be assisted, sooner or later, by science. Egyptian painting was no exception. As for the raw materials of the art, this people suffered no dearth; at hand were the acacia, the flax plant, the papyrus reed, the ochres, and many others. Commerce with Syria, Arabia, and other countries gave to the Egyptians copper ores which served as a basis for the blues and greens used in glazing stone, quartz, and siliceous work generally. The Nubian mines made gold leaf possible and convenient. Cobalt was found for the ancient potters' use. Linen and other textile fabrics were made and dyed. Painting was done on walls, coffins, and papyrus in illuminating the text. Painters were familiar with media made of glue, gum arabic, white and yellow of egg, balsams, resins, tar, and vegetal oils which became resinous by oxidation; they used red and yellow ochres, a dull and occasionally a light green, a beautiful blue made by the powdering of copper glaze, glass, or frit, and made into a pigment, which accords with a statement of Vitruvius. This blue was known at least as early as the eleventh dynasty, and it was used in Rome as

late as during the Empire. Wine vinegar assured them white lead and verdigris.

It is evident that the Egyptians were well equipped for the mechanical art of painting; and that this art has been intimately associated with others such as those of glass-making and staining, enamelling, mosaic work, the dyeing of fabrics, and with the sciences of metallurgy, chemistry, optics, and hygroscopy.

Indeed, man's æsthetic growth has always had its roots in strata which have supported his material needs. And it is obvious that any particular art is shaped and influenced by the materials it uses. This is exemplified by architecture, whether in stone, wood, clay, or other material, and by painting, whether in pastel, oil, tempera, or encaustic.

When all is said, Egypt lacked in the art of painting the splendid spirit born to endure through years that change,—a living spirit that is back of all art as the stars that gleam and throb back of life. In a land kissed by the sun's grace, painting took on the cold light of the sleepless moon; and its inspiration rose only to the point from which subsequent ages took the altitude of art.

CHAPTER VII

EARLY PAINTING. 2.—ETRUSCAN

THE Etruscans were early borrowers from Egypt. In some respects the genius of this people improved nearly everything it touched. Their artists worked over crude Egyptian designs which they often made into things of beauty. As to the exact antiquity of their painting, there is apparently no settled agreement among historians. Pliny believed that it had reached a considerable degree of artistic development while the Hellenes were still engaged with the primitive problems of the art. Other authors believe that, unlike the Greeks, they had no easel-painting, and that they never acquired a high form of the art. Be that as it may, Ægean art soon surpassed the Etrurian. For it is well known that architecture, sculpture, and painting, developed to a considerable degree in Etruria, drew much of their beauty from the Greek fount.

There can be little doubt that the Etruscans practised painting as a fine art at an early period. Pliny mentions antique paintings which were in fine preservation even at his day in the cities of

Ardea, Lanuvium, and Cære. Many examples of the art from remote times have been preserved to us in Etruscan tombs. The work was done on a foundation of white stucco in a great variety of tints. Some of it is clumsy and realistic. Many of the more ancient pictures are crude and conventional, such, for instance, as were found at Veii. Others, again, show a style pregnant with beauty, and of correctness in design, that is quite remarkable—for example: those discovered in the tombs at Tarquinii. "In these tombs," says Westropp, "the pilasters are profusely adorned with arabesques, and a frieze which runs round the side of the tomb is composed of painted figures, draped, winged, armed, fighting, or borne in chariots. The subjects of these paintings are various; in them we find the ideas of the Etruscans on the state of the soul after death, combats of warriors, banquets, funeral scenes. The Etruscans painted also bas-reliefs and statues."

The growth of painting with this people is very well shown by the terra-cotta vases from 700 to 200 B.C. And while the progress of painting in Etruria during these five hundred years is marred by fluctuations corresponding to æsthetic variations in its environment, on the whole it is surprisingly uniform. From simple designs of common subjects such as flowers, wreaths, and animals done in monochrome on brown or ash-tinted ground, to quite wonderful figures known to have been introduced as early as the first part of the

sixth century, is no little evidence of artistic variety and vitality. These figures were worked in brown on a ground of cream. Variations in colour scheme soon followed. Black, white, and crimson were employed with clear outlines which were often trenchant and nearly always spirited. About 450 B.C. black began to be used on a red ground. And a very interesting fact to note in passing is that some of the forms of the clay vases of the "Sixth City" of Hissarlik were reproduced in bronze by this people.

The painters went little further in the imitation of nature than to represent the flesh of women with lighter tones than that of the men. About this time also appear figures of white, blue, and red on black ground. The dominant ideas of Etruscan painters seem to have been related to the quest of harmony in colour, and of the problems of beauty in design, form, and composition. The motif was largely decorative; and no attention was given to the witcheries of light and shade. Just what the influence was of the Greek workmen on later Etruscan painting is perhaps very much a matter of speculation, and it is of no particular importance.

CHAPTER VIII

EARLY PAINTING. 3.—GREEK

THE Greeks, as we have grown accustomed to call the Hellenes, were a mixed people. Their solidarity was a result of language, of a state of mind lofty in ideals, passionate in the love of independence, and broad enough with the spirit of toleration to harmonize differences of politics and religion.

Until the latter part of the fourth century, B.C., they were grouped in small city states, capable at times of united action which brought about a broad political harmony. They were blended of Northern and Southern elements to a various degree in different places; and while Athens dominated the Northern, the Southern elements were swayed by Sparta. A composite conception of Greek life on the whole, therefore, is difficult to form. And its influence on the rest of the world down to the present time cannot be estimated.

The effect of Greek culture on Rome we know was very great. In a word, Hellenistic art was borrowed, modified, and made Roman. In literature, the Roman taste was a little higher than

in the other arts, and therefore Hellenic literature was the inspiration of the Roman poets. The assimilation of Greek culture was complete in the Augustan Age.

The Byzantine Empire was Greek in language, Roman in organization, and Christian in religion. Western Europe was in a dark age. The influence of Greek and Byzantine civilization on the art of Italy was as apparent and unmistakable as was the effect of the Etruscan on the earlier Roman.

Eventually the spirit of the Renaissance broke out in Tuscany and spread over Europe. Art was reborn, and its Greek soul sweetened life with delight. A new love for knowledge and truth quickened the heart of Europe with many and diverse aspirations. Painting received fresh inspiration until it breathed somewhat of Greek ideals and exhaled somewhat of Greek glory. All the avenues of thought were bordered with the spirit of Greek temples, at least on one side. On the other, no doubt, was the dignified, orderly classic spirit; but the Greek spirit, to which something had been added, was dominant in the end, of which the classic spirit was the means. European civilization was close enough to the classic Roman at that time to see clearly how different from it was this rebirth or, rather, new-birth. It was only as men forgot that they began to be confused. This is markedly evident in architecture and in literature. The English drama was a happy exception. In England the spirit of

Greece had found nurturing soil. Byron and Shelley felt the Greek freedom; while on the other side of the Channel, Goethe and Hugo both had Greek souls. Even modern science, philosophy, and art have inherited from Greece nomenclature, method, and inspiration. Humanism and Democracy have joined Athens with modern England across a span of twenty-five hundred years.

Greek art naturally interests us more than any other of ancient times. In the first place, art reached its purest form in Greece. In the second, we of the West are the spiritual children of Hellenic civilization. We hope eventually to equal the æsthetic stature of our fathers, and to come to our own in philosophy. The hour has not yet sounded for us to take possession of the fulness of our heritage; but when that time comes, we shall welcome all the more a wealth which has been so long and so unfortunately delayed.

Painters and others interested in their ideals and problems will never cease to regret the meagreness of the knowledge available of Greek painting. Therefore, the information which we have concerning the art is precious in proportion as it is small. Its actual worth today may not be as much to painting itself as to the psychology of the art.

At all events, between lines and from fragments, one may read, sometimes vaguely and often indistinctly, of technical variations which in later times were employed by the "Old Masters" in their best works.

Certainly, there abound luminous suggestions of the spirit of a great people; and more than mere hints may be found of principles which have been recently uncovered by students of art and science. One of the most painstaking of these, for example, having studied the methods of the old masters, has demonstrated what thoughtful persons have long suspected, namely: that there is no antagonism between art and science. That is to say, the work of a painter cannot be hurt by any definite knowledge which he may acquire of the principles of light, the laws of optics, the relations of physics, or the chemistry of materials combined in the process of producing his painting. In other words, knowledge of what he is doing will not mar the emotive values of his finished work. Wisdom is not likely to crowd out the *feeling* which may be in a painter's head. His art should have the aid of science if it would produce uniformly, that is to say, regardless of the excellences of accident, the best results of which it is capable. There can be no friction between the expression of sane emotion and the rational use of knowledge. Wisdom and emotion work together in all their higher phases when expression is the function of intellectuality.

It is well known that the old masters were versed in the traditions of their craft. One important element of their working-knowledge possibly came from the experience of artists in stained-glass effects. The heightened value of one colour

when seen through another was appreciated by them, if not scientifically understood. They knew how to produce in painting the illusion of luminosity; they understood both range and effect of superposed transparent screens when properly tinted and opposed by contrast. If they did not know the reason why certain results followed certain methods, they knew at least how to apply the methods, and their surviving works prove that they achieved the fine effects.

Whether the old masters rediscovered all the principles which they followed so well in their practice, and from which their technic was evolved, or whether some knowledge of these things survived the decadence of Greek art through the Hellenistic and later periods, cannot now be definitely known; nor is it of great importance, since similar causes, as it were, produce similar effects. In the words of Virchow: "The human intellect invents identical things at different places, and different things at the same place."

It might, however, be of some importance to the future of painting if what is more than probable could be clearly established by proof, viz.: that the principles of painting together with the materials used produced virtually the technic, first, of the best Greek masters; second, of the old masters; and third, of the Tonal masters of intermediate and modern times.

Greece was probably instructed in the art of

painting by Egypt; and possibly the Hellenes received some inspiration from Assyria's ideals of strength. The beginnings of Hellenic painting were poor enough, judged by later standards, to have sprung from a source almost as chaotic as our own modern school of Cubists or of Futurists. Pliny says, let us hope with the irony of indigestion, that even mediæval Greek paintings had to be labelled to be understood. Still, it is an old saying that mighty oaks from little acorns grow. Greek painting grew from a sound *acorn*, and not from the worm-eaten little *pignut*, so to speak, which so many of our present-day painters are planting with such care.

There may be truth in the contention that Greek painting as an art never reached the perfection and glory of Greek sculpture; that it lacked movement and therefore took on statuesque characteristics which were out of place; that it sacrificed colour in order to perfect design; and that the subtleties of light and shade were neglected for proportion and charm of form; that it was never able to produce the higher chants of colour-harmony, and all that.

Yet, if we had no other means of judging except by analogy, we should hardly suppose that a people so richly gifted with artistic feeling, so noble and exquisite in the conception and execution of sculpture and architecture, could have been incapable of similar attainment in the kindred art of painting; and especially since we know

that they followed it so long with serious study and indefatigable zeal.

It is conceded that the Greeks excelled in the arts of sculpture and literature; but that the arts of music and painting were of parallel and synchronous development has been doubted by some authorities. One argument against the likelihood of a high order of painting having been developed by the Greeks is postulated on this doubt.

As to music, judged by our modern standards, it is probable that the Greeks were below us in the evolution of this art. Athletic acrobats no doubt they were; but we have no evidence that they equalled the acrobatic feats of our present-epoch musicians. Even at that, a still small doubt lingers in the minds of some modern folk who love music that the later progress in this art has kept pace with the development of musical acrobatics. And it may be that the music which the Greeks coaxed from simple instruments and with which they accompanied their splendid choral songs was a higher form of the art than that which we torture from many strings and pipes.

As to painting, it appeared as a fine art among the Hellenes later than sculpture, although its progress was perhaps more rapid. Throwing aside the Greek painters' popular *réclame* as no criterion by which to judge the æsthetic value of the art, it is hardly consistent to assume that it was therefore mediocre. No one, so far as I know, has questioned the intellectuality and æsthetic

taste of the Greek master-painters. Many of them won lasting renown in the sister arts. The æsthetic value which they placed upon the art of painting, as practised by them and their colleagues, it seems to me should not be disregarded. Surely, if the artistic taste of any people may be accepted as trustworthy, that of the Greeks at the best period of their art-cycle ought to have some weight with us.

It is true that the paintings of antiquity have perished, as have the treatises on art, for the most part, by the ancient artists themselves. But fortunately we have some records of both; and it seems only reasonable to assume that the art must have reached a high state of development to have called forth books on the subject by such men as Apelles, Protogenes, and Melanthius. Besides these books, there were *Painting and Celebrated Painters*, by Pamphilus; *Symmetry and Colours*, by Euphranor; and Junius adds others to the list in his *Pictura Veterum*. We know in part, as it is said in Corinthians, and we must guess at the rest. This truth justified Emerson in saying:

> Not from a vain or shallow thought
> His awful Jove young Phidias wrought.

It follows that the majority of trustworthy historians are inclined to believe that the art of painting ran its full cycle in Greece. Although it may be true that sculpture was more in har-

mony with Hellenic temperament, and therefore preferred over painting, it still seems overwhelmingly probable that painting reached a rounded development when cultivated by a people so richly gifted.

The very fact that schools of painting, in the modern sense, existed in Greece shows that the art had advanced to the large course of its development. In early Egyptian painting, and later in early Christian, the art was governed largely by tradition, which left little freedom to individual initiative and the art therefore remained static. But in the best era of Greek painting personal achievement and the individual triumphs of rivals and the successes of followers, formed into schools, gave a cosmic impetus to the art and an assurance of growth not only but an evidence that it had reached a high stage of evolution. From the later mediæval period, down, a similar phenomenon is observed. Our own best modern work is the result of that phenomenon.

Since we know that Democritus and Anaxagoras treated of perspective in a manner quite modern; and since the laws of perspective were well understood by Greek painters as early as the dawn of the fourth century B.C., it is very difficult for me to believe that the Greek mind at its best failed to perfect an art which it tried so long and hard to master, especially when full knowledge and appreciation of that which is vital to the art were current among the artists.

Tradition and history give a long list of names of Hellenic and Hellenistic painters, together with considerable comment on them and their works. Thus it would seem that from the earliest Sicyonic outlines, down through the monochromatic period to the time of Cimon of Cleonæ in Chalcidice, there was steady if not remarkable progress. Then the genius of Cimon swept away with a stroke of his brush whatever archaic rigidity still clung to canvas.

This painter introduced a variety of colours in his work and applied perspective to his figures; indeed, he is said to have been the first in his day to practise foreshortening. He also attacked the problems of anatomy and succeeded in representing draperies that settle upon the form without hiding it.

According to tradition, before the time of Cimon one Eumarus of Athens was the first Greek painter to differentiate the sexes pictorially. If true, he probably followed a custom of the early vase-decorators who represented female flesh with a lighter tone than that of the male. Pliny says that he also indicated the differences in age between his subjects.

With the advent of Cimon, painting emerged from the uncertainty of tradition and entered the clearer light of history; and under his influence it culminated in the early Peloponnesian school. As the work of this school was confined almost wholly to wall decoration in the small rooms of

temples, it is presumed that its followers were fresco painters, who at that time were masters of at least two technics. Their palette was simple but powerful, composed of white, yellow, red, and bluish-black. It is said that they were better draughtsmen than colourists, which is probably true, yet not necessarily the sequence of a simple palette; for some of the best colourists have used few pigments.

The great epoch of Grecian painting began at the time of Cimon and continued to that of Alexander. Polygnotus of Thasos, first to achieve great renown, went to live at Athens somewhere about the time of 460 B.C. He and his contemporaries established painting as a fine art in all its essentials. They handled colouring and form with power and understanding, and rendered character with facility. Polygnotus is referred to by Theophrastus, Pliny, Aristotle, Cicero, and others. It is known that he worked with the hair-brush as well as with the cestrum. Then came Apollodorus, Zeuxis, Parrhasius, Eupompus, Timanthes, and others, who enlivened and embellished the broad or generic style of their predecessors in the previous generation. The dramatic element was introduced in composition; form was enriched with local colour and colour with tone; character was accentuated, and objects were rendered more intelligible by a judicious treatment of local colour with regard to the accidental peculiarities of their appearance.

The Alexandrian period was principally devoted

to refinement. It merely added, as Wornum says, "variety of method and effect to the already perfect art of the preceding age." Among the great Alexandrian masters, of whom more will be said, were Apelles, Pamphilus, Protogenes, Euphranor, Nicias, Nicomachus, Aristides, Pausias. These painters belonged virtually to one class, although each won distinction in one or more of several qualities, chiefly technical. One strove to excel in high finish, another in grace, others in facility, in charm of light and shade, in figure-perspective, in novelty, in grouping, etc. Aristides of the Theban Attic school, for example, paid his most particular attention to emotional expression, being rather careless and hard in his use of colours.

The tendency was more and more in the direction of technical excellence which too often degenerated into mannerism. The higher and nobler qualities of the art were slowly sacrificed for petty effects; method and form engaged the attention of the masters rather more than essence and ideal. Naturally, their pupils were led in the same unfortunate direction. In certain other respects, decadence was even more rapid as it fell away from the Alexandrian period. A similar change occurred in Italian art at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The school of Carracci, compared with the Roman and Florentine schools of the previous century, illustrates much the same process of devolution as that which took place in

Grecian art during and following the Alexandrian period.

In consequence of political convulsions succeeded by economic confusion, governmental changes weakened the national spirit and so demoralized the national power that Greece became a Roman province. Art did not recover from its decline. That class of the population which was the prop and the encouragement of art became so engrossed in war and politics that it could give little or no aid to art's languishing spirit. A still further depression of artistic inspiration was caused by the great abundance of masterpieces which filled Greece to overflowing. The victors found it easier to rifle her temples than to encourage the production of similar work—and it was cheaper. Finally, art sank to the level of *genre*, decoration, caricature, and, occasionally, eroticism.

Hardly more than a cursory glance over the history of Hellenic painting leads to the conclusion that at one time it was no more than a subservient handmaiden to the arts of architecture and ceramics; and that from a mere craftsmanship of crude colouring, it passed through various stages, assisted by the growth of indigenous arts of kin, and stimulated by the importation of exotic ideals, until it evolved into the fine art of painting, as we of today understand that art.

Not until recent years has our knowledge of "Greek" art extended much beyond the sixth century B.C. This was a period of harmonious

growth in which the ideals of art, having early shaken off archaic influences, soon reached their fullest "classic" expression. The excavations of Schliemann revealed earlier wonders. The Mycenæan Age opened new vistas of a remoter civilization in which art had flourished and decayed.

The researches of Sir Arthur J. Evans discovered surprising art-wealth in Crete of a period called Minoan. The great palace of Minos at Cnossos gives us glimpses of a high order of civilization as early as 2000 B.C. Under its walls lie the ruins of another royal abode which carries us back perhaps another thousand or more years. It was on the six-acre site of the palace of Minos that Mythology confined the monster Minotaur in the Labyrinth.

The walls of this palace were admirably prepared to receive colour: rubble, lime, clay, and plaster were laid on in different thicknesses of progressive fineness and finish. The last layer was of lime, thinly and smoothly applied; and it was probably painted when wet. The colours used were black chalk, red and yellow ochres, and Egyptian blue. The use of this blue indicates that commerce existed between Crete and Egypt as early as between 1500 to 2000 B.C.—probably much earlier.

Some of the frescoes are well preserved, showing remarkable paintings of processions, sports, court scenes, landscapes, and marines. "Both the signet types and other objects of art here discovered display the fresh naturalism that character-

izes in a special way the first Late Minoan period. A remarkable wall-painting depicts a cat creeping over ivy-covered rocks and about to spring on a pheasant." Many of the miniature wall-paintings of this period are especially fine.

An earlier Minoan period, perhaps the Middle, so called, was rich in painted pottery of polychrome decoration known as "Kamares." At the same time a school of wall-painting flourished together with advanced metal technic and gem engraving. Steatite vases recently unearthed carry reliefs of great importance depicting warriors, wrestlers, hunters, pugilists, and reapers singing and dancing. There is also a limestone sarcophagus covered with stucco and painted with offertory scenes.

There are also evidences that sculpture and painting were combined in coloured reliefs. Carvings in gypsum reveal traits almost Gothic. Even the sanitary arrangements, baths, etc., nearly equal the best of such things produced in our own times. The architecture of the palace suggests the Assyrian style. This period moreover produced excellent modelling in ivory, metal, and stone, showing both grace and freedom of action. Indeed, there are countless indications of a very long previous epoch of artistic development which culminated in truly remarkable expression.

Again, Schliemann's work on the supposed site of Troy has brought to light six cities, one built upon the remains of another, the fourth being the Troy of the *Iliad*. The ruins of this city yield

works of art similar in many respects to those of the Mycenæan Age, which covers roughly a period of fifteen hundred years down to about 1000 B.C., or to the beginning of the Dorian invasion from the north which scattered the Mycenæans over the Ægean Islands.

Pliny remarks that Homer does not mention painting. And Schliemann says, with exceptions noted, that "*There is no trace of painting on any object ever found in any one of the five prehistoric cities of Hissarlik.*" I am told that some recent discoveries modify the force of Schliemann's statement. However, Ilium, the "Burnt City of Gold," was situated on the fortress-hill of Hissarlik, where, among the ruins, have been found much evidence of prehistoric painting.

The slow erosion of time, the rapid canker of strife, the revolutions of peoples, and the periodic devolution of civilization, have done much to obscure the memory and even to obliterate the names of Hellenic pioneers in painting.

It is alleged, however, that Cleanthes of Corinth was one of the early figure-draughtsmen who, like the Egyptian Philocles, essayed nothing further than outline; that Telephanes of Sicyon, the cradle of painting, improved on the work of Cleanthes by his studies in anatomy and of shading; and that Euphantes of Corinth, or Craton of Sicyon, or both, advanced the art by experimentation in the manipulation of colour (Pliny).

Bularchus (718 B.C.) was a famous painter of the

Asia Minor school, which antedated the Peloponnesian, and which in a given time progressed more rapidly in the use of colours than did the Peloponnesian. This was owing perhaps in part to the teaching of the Phœnicians and to the influence of the Phrygians and Lydians, who, by virtue of long practice in the management of pigments, had grown skilful. According to Pliny, Bularchus sold his large painting of the battle with the Magnetes to Candaules, King of Lydia, for its weight in gold, or as some think, for a sufficient number of gold coins with which to cover it.

On the island of Samos, historic painting rose early to a high pitch of excellence. Herodotus says that a large picture by Mandrocles, representing the Persians as crossing the Bosphorus on a bridge of boats in 515 B.C., and depicting Darius as enthroned on shore, was honourably placed in the local Heræum.

Calliphon and Agatharchus both belonged to the Samian school, which is thought to have influenced the work of Aglaophon of Thasos.

Artistic energy never remains personal or local very long. Soon after painting approximated an art in its development at Corinth, it began to vibrate in Etruria, southern Italy, and Sicily.

During the Second Period, so called, the Hellenic painters mastered to a considerable degree the technic of large composition, in which they depicted battle scenes, and commemorated other stirring historic events. The decorative element

at this time prevailed in painting as in sculpture. Heroic legends were uppermost in the minds of the people. The artists therefore found it necessary to render variety of subject and, by treatment as well as in composition, to satisfy public taste. To this end much truth in nature was sacrificed, as, for example, in the rendering of human likeness. In order to whet public interest in pictures, many painters wrote the names of the persons represented alongside their "portraits," as was done in the early days by the decorators of vases.

Panænus, brother, nephew, or cousin of the great Phidias (a painter himself at the beginning of his career), was the first to introduce portraiture, worthy the name, in the painting of his battle-heroes. According to Strabo and Pausanias, he executed many famous works.

Polygnotus of Thasos, whose twenty-four years of marvellous activity began about 480 B.C., was the earliest known great master in Hellenic painting—the most brilliant light perhaps of the Third Period. His accurate drawing was noted for its style and grace; and in the opinion of Aristotle, he improved on his models in his quest of ideal beauty. Philostratus intimates that he was effective in shading, a master of accent and airiness; and Fuseli thinks that he helped very largely to educate public taste for the ideal in art. We know that he did work in public buildings both at Athens and Delphi.

From scraps of history one must infer that

Polygnotus was a great master. When he essayed expression it was always in a meritorious manner, personally quite his own; and he coped successfully with its variety of problems. His female figures were especially well done—vivacious and beautiful. He touched lips with smiles, put ornaments in the hair, and threw transparent draperies into the playful arms of the breeze. He was well versed in legendary lore,—a man of broad culture and of many interests; and altogether he seems to have been a serious character: sincere, public spirited, and deeply thrilled with religious feeling.

It is said of him that he reflected his personal characteristics even in his large tabular paintings. Many of his works are described in detail by Pausanias, "the gazetteer of Hellas." His paintings generally, whether in sacred temples or elsewhere, won for him great renown and public honour throughout the cities of Hellas. Aristotle praised his work as "dignified" and contrasted it with that of Zeuxis, which he called "pathetic"—two words of more ample meaning than we are accustomed to give them. Quintilian and Pliny have both referred to differences which existed between his style and that of Apelles.

Although some authors have stated that neither Polygnotus nor Micon progressed further than coloured outlines, paying no attention to modelling, it can hardly be doubted that Polygnotus, at least, was an innovator as well as a master; that he softened the previous rigidity and severity of

the features, painted open lips; and that beneath his draperies he suggested structure. A considerable accomplishment at his time! In passing, it may be mentioned that his brother, Aristophon, was also a successful painter whose "works were distinguished for their expressive qualities," in the words of Champlin.

Among the younger contemporaries of Polygnotus were Dionysius of Colophon, celebrated for his laborious accuracy, and Pausias, the caricaturist, who was remarkable for his animal painting, notably his big black sacrificial ox which he drew foreshortened. He was also noted for his ceilings, his miniatures of children, and for his technical refinements of encaustics; but he was even more renowned as the butt of Aristophanes. Some authors believe that he was of a later period than that of Polygnotus.

Then, as now, the painter was confronted with many problems. An insistent difficulty, always present, is how to create that which seems probable while possessing novelty and some form of beauty, since the emotions are lured by beauty, ruffled and repelled by ugliness.

Zeuxis (about 455 B.C.) was also aware of these problems, and he was able to overcome some of their difficulties. He was a fine colourist, in the sense of imitating colour as it appears in nature; and he helped to advance the art with his novelty of subject and refinement of execution. He was a vain man, but not without some reason. When

he reached the summit of his fame, he no longer sold, but gave away his paintings. This must seem "queer" to the modern painter! Zeuxis worked very slowly; once in reply to criticism, he said: "It is true, I take a long time to paint; but then I paint works to last a long time." Some author has said that his style was analogous to that of Euripides in tragedy.

Many amusing anecdotes have been told of Zeuxis and Parrhasius, both being noted for their vanity. Zeuxis is said to have painted a bunch of grapes so true to life that birds tried to eat them; and Parrhasius, nettled by the success of his rival, set all Athens agog by painting a curtain so realistically that Zeuxis tried to pull it aside to see the picture behind it. This reminds me of the tale told of Sir Joshua's parrot: Reynolds had a maid who was on bad terms with the bird. One of his friends painted a portrait of the servant that was so lifelike the parrot invariably attacked it on occasion. These anecdotes are probably on a par with one told of our American Mr. Church who played a "famous trick of painting a bit of sunlight on his studio-table,—fooling his friends into searching for the chink that let it in." Zeuxis is said to have died of laughter while looking at one of his own funny paintings, which should warn painters to regard their own anecdotes rather seriously.

Both Aristotle and Pliny lead us to infer that the Greek masters used white under-colouring or

groundwork; and according to Wornum, it seems "that Zeuxis executed designs similar to the Italian *chiaroscuro* upon a white ground." If this statement is true, it helps to prepare the way for interesting speculation as to the relationship between the technics of the old masters and their Greek archetypes.

The female figures pictured by Zeuxis are said to have been unusually fine, especially his *Helena of Crotonia*, which has been widely praised. He chose his models from maidens celebrated for their beauty; and he seems to have been assiduous in his devotion to the study of form and colour. He is also reputed to have grasped the indefinable quality of majesty which, it is said, he threw so well about his enthroned Zeus. The only element that remained with him of the older schools was the large mould of his figures. In brief, the personality and work of this man were far from negligible factors in effecting a change in the style of Greek painting.

Parrhasius, "the immoral painter," was a native of Ephesus but he was identified with the art of Athens, of which city he was made a citizen. He was regarded as a painter-philosopher; having established a canon in painting, Quintilian called him the legislator of his art. He excelled in drawing and he was master of proportion. It is the opinion of James Barry and others that he helped to introduce a style of art whereby Nature was represented in her broader aspects and higher

semblances. He seemed to feel the need of propriety in art, if not so much in personal conduct, which reveals a marked modernity of spirit.

This master not only borrowed modelling from the plastic arts, which he presented to painting, but he grappled with human passions, mannerisms, and customs which he succeeded in expressing in his work. He achieved remarkable contours and delicate rotundity in his figures; and his creations generally were noted for their richness and variety. He was regarded by his contemporaries as a painstaking, conscientious worker who made it a rule to do careful pen-and-ink studies on parchment before starting a painting. Some of these drawings were extant at the time of Pliny. But, great as he was, he was vanquished in a painting-contest by Timanthes of Cythnus.

In his *Sacrifice of Iphigenia*, this successful rival of Parrhasius carried grief to the acme of intensity possible to art at that time, or, perhaps, since. Cicero greatly admired this painting; and Pliny, speaking of Timanthes, says that there is "always something more implied than expressed in his work." This suggests the touch that makes all genius kin. For the noblest expression of any art never takes all the juice out of the orange, but always leaves an indefinite quantity awaiting the various needs of numberless beholders who are supposed to extract it, as if by magic.

The most striking effect in this celebrated picture was Agamemnon's face hidden in his mantle.

Many critics have called it a mere trick; and M. Falconet, who had scant praise for Timanthes, believed that the painter merely copied from the description of the sacrifice, as it was found in Euripides: "*Agamemnon saw Iphigenia advance toward the fatal altar; he groaned, he turned aside his head, he shed tears, and covered his face with his robe.*"

The weight of critical opinion, I think, is contrary to this view. The face of the figure was veiled in compliance with a fundamental law of Greek art which permitted only the beautiful to be presented to the eye. And it is a racial misfortune that violations of this law are not held to be criminal; since it is a prime function of art to give pleasure to the emotions, pleasure can be attained only through some form of beauty; the presentation of ugliness, therefore, is a kind of murder which should be discouraged.

Thus, in hiding the convulsed face of the father, Timanthes exemplified a principle that is universal in the æsthetic world, and, sorry to say, almost universally disregarded.

Parrhasius did his full share in helping to advance the art of painting in Greece. His life at Athens was fruitful; and he had learned things from Socrates, with whom he was intimate, as well as from the great painters. His draughtsmanship was celebrated; his colouring was better than that of his predecessors and most of his contemporaries. Among his famous paintings were *The*

Contest of Ajax and Odysseus, *Prometheus*, *Theseus*, and *Hercules*.

In some respects Timanthes carried the sacred torch still further to illumine the expression of emotion. He seems to have understood fully the vital objects of art, showing at the same time a high order of genius in expressing them. How much he owed to Asiatic influence cannot be definitely said. At this time there were two great schools of painting in Greece: one at Sicyon, which accentuated the importance of drawing,—of form and proportion; the other at Athens, which chiefly emphasized emotional expression. The Sicyonic school was founded by Eupompus in the early part of the third century B.C., possibly earlier. It was successful; but the chief renown of both school and founder was achieved by a pupil named Pamphilus. It was this pupil who perfected the foreshortening methods introduced, as some say, by Cimon; it was this pupil who brought about innovations in the handling of form and in the management of colours; and it was he also who founded the Academy. The work of Pamphilus was especially notable in the technic of encaustics, which in turn was further advanced by his pupil, Pausias. Among his other distinguished pupils were Apelles and Melanthius. He was one of the first Greek painters to profit by scientific attainments in his art-work.

Euphranor of Corinth, as a sculptor-painter, wisely chose a mid-course between the Attic and

Sicyonic schools. He developed historic and mythologic painting to a higher degree than had hitherto been attained. He fed his heroes on beef, as he said, rather than on roses; that is to say, he painted flesh and blood. This man was not only great as a painter, but almost equally so as an author and a statuary. Pliny drew largely from his treatises on *Symmetry and Colour*. Lucien ranks him with Phidias and Apelles.

Nicomachus, son and pupil of Aristiæus, and father or brother of Aristides, was at the head of the school of Thebes, an offshoot of the Sicyonic, from the traditions of which it later diverged. He was praised by Cicero, Pliny, and Plutarch who "compares his pictures with the verses of Homer, as having, besides strength and beauty, the charm of seeming to have been executed with little effort" (Champlin).

Aristides, of this school, painted a picture preserved to us only in Pliny's description. This gruesome work represented a mother wounded in the breast at the capture of a town. Clinging to her bleeding flesh was a babe; and on her face was an expression of dread lest the child suck blood instead of milk.

Boileau observes "that a new and extraordinary thought is by no means a thought which no person ever conceived before, or could possibly conceive, on the contrary, it is such a thought as must have occurred to every man in the like case, and have been one of the first in any person's mind upon the same

occasion; these reflections still do not render it difficult to distinguish imitation and plagiarism from necessary resemblance and unavoidable analogy . . . " and the same critic observes that Poussin is not accused of plagiarism for having painted Agrippina covering her face with both her hands at the death of Germanicus, though Timanthes had represented Agamemnon closely veiled at the sacrifice of his daughter, judiciously leaving the spectator to guess at a sorrow inexpressible, and that mocked the power of the pencil. Neither can Raffaelle be accused in his design of the Pest, where he has represented a child creeping to suck the breast of its dead mother; though Aristides, in the picture of a Sacked City, has described the concern of a dying mother lest her infant, who is creeping to her side, should lick the blood that flows from her breast and mistake it for her milk. Poussin has committed a plagiarism where, in his picture of the Plague in Exodus, he has not only copied the mother and child from Raffaelle, but also the father who stretches over to push it from the nipple. (*The Discourses of Sir Joshua Reynolds.*)

Such things show that offences have been committed against the laws of art for a long time, even by those who should have known better. This spirit was beginning to infect painting, and it occurred in similar fashion to sculpture, notably at the hands of the three great Rhodians. It was characteristic, in a way, of the Hellenistic period, as exemplified by the *Laocoön* and the *Farnese Bull.*

Aristides also produced many *genre* pictures;

but he made his greatest reputation as a passionist, and he was very clever in the field of encaustics. Among other noted painters of this time was Nicias, he who "set his mark" on the marbles of Praxiteles.

The style of Polygnotus and his school changed in the Fourth Period. The transition led to a new vogue in which dignity and nobility of character, pose, and stately measure were sacrificed to subtler beauty and smaller effect. The spirit of the times had changed, and with it changed the manner and execution of art. The basic principles of art in themselves remain as fixed as the law of gravitation, or any other universal fact. They may be likened to the sea whose tides ebb and flow, and whose moods change according to the weather; but the sea itself never changes—it is always the sea. The superficial phenomena of society are as restless as the surface of the sea; they change and the tides of art change with them, shifting from age to age.

It is the same today as it was in Græcian times. Æschylus had raised drama to the skies; both he and Sophocles laid great stress of importance on the peculiar requirements of scene-painting. The great scene-painter of that period was Agatharchus of Samos. His influence on the works of Democritus and Anaxagoras, as well as his own example and personality, had a powerful effect in shaping the new school, and in formulating the requirements of perspective.

To Apollodorus, the Athenian, is given the credit of having been the first painter-priest, so to speak, among the Greeks to marry light and colour in the sweet bonds of shade. From this union sprang life in art. He was clever enough to discover that the eye sees not alone by light, but rather more by shade. He had sense enough to know, which many of us have not, that light in a picture is poorly suggested merely by painting in a high key. He understood at least some of the insistent needs of tone achieved by broken colour,—some of the primal necessities of his art; and thus he appreciated the values of contrast,—all which cannot be said of the great mass of painter folk from his day to this.

It is true that Apollodorus had many advantages over painters who had preceded him. Perspective had been discovered and developed; Agatharcus had invented scene-painting for a tragedy of Æschylus; and the wondrous sculpture of the Parthenon had reached the flower of its perfection nearly a hundred years before his time. Still, he was great enough to profit by the best that had been done in making something else better; and therefore he was a synthetic creator rather than an analytical constructionist; and he was well worthy the praise bestowed upon him in the 93d Olympiad. Several of his paintings are mentioned by Pliny, and many of them were extolled by earlier authors. He was the first strong man, evidently, to master gradation of tone and to discard

entirely the old schematic empiricism for the living relations which exist in the light of Nature.

In many respects, Apelles was the greatest painter of them all. In him were combined the choice qualities of previous masters and schools. With a palette almost as simple, it is said, as that of the Peloponnesian, he was acclaimed the great colourist; and, at the same time, he was able to grip the elusive quality called grace. From his own Ionian school he took that which was beautiful or good and united it with the best qualities of the Sicyonic. Besides fine colouring and sensual charm, he possessed a poise usually found based only on the safe ground of scientific knowledge.

It requires a richly gifted intellect to weld the best qualities of others into a work more superb, bearing withal an individual impress. This it would seem is what he did; although, according to Plutarch, he studied at the renowned school of Sicyon, not for what he might learn, but for the reputation that it gave.

From late Greek and various Roman sources, we learn that Apelles was a famous painter of deities, the best known of which was his *Aphrodite Anadyomene*. This work was often cited as the best example of his masterly genius. Augustus had it removed from Cos to Rome and placed in a temple. At the time of Nero it had already fallen into a state of decay, but it was still widely copied.

Apelles, Zeuxis, Protogenes, *et al.*, were such masterful painters that although their works have

perished, their fame still lives on earth. In the words of a celebrated Italian author: "They drew after the light of fancy, the examples of mind, which alone gives animation, energy, and beauty to art, and causes the loves and the graces to descend and to take up their habitation in . . . the emptiness of light and shadow."

Apelles, the apogee of Greek painting, has been called the spiritual forebear of Raphael. How much there was in common between Apelles and Botticelli, it would be difficult to say. The fact that Botticelli was enabled to restore Apelles' design of *Calumny*, suggests nothing more than that Lucien's description of the original was particularly fine. The truth is probably that Apelles and Raphael were alike and unlike, in that they employed similar technics and followed dissimilar ideals.

Apelles, we know, painted at the court of Philip of Macedonia, and later he was so intimately associated with Alexander, according to *The Historians' History of the World*, that no other artist "had his consent to draw his picture." This accords with the reputation of Alexander, who refused to have any portrait made of himself except by the best artists. As a further mark of Alexander's admiration for Apelles as a painter, as well as of his warm personal esteem, may be cited this incident from Félicien Champsaur,—rather a severe test! "*Champaspe, illustre courtisane, maîtresse d'Alexandre le Grand et peinte par Apelle,*

devenu si éperdument épris de son modèle que le Roi, par admiration pour l'Artiste, renonçant à son amour, lui permit de l'épouser."

The most marked characteristic of the work of Apelles, perhaps, was thoughtfulness; but he must also have had the spontaneous creative faculty of an ideal artist despite the frequent criticism that he was deficient in poetic conception. It would seem that a successful painter of deities must have a strong poetic imagination, and that he must be rich in the expression of rare creative ability. It is conceded, however, that his treatment of light and shade was highly successful, and that he delighted in painting thunderstorms, which he did with ease and mythologic personification. In the words of Mrs. Browning, he was master of the "thunders of white silence."

Pliny's opinions on art and his taste in painting are not highly regarded, but his quotations on these matters are instructive. As Reynolds says, when Pliny speaks of Apelles' glazes, he uses a language that has weight with students of technic. Pliny says that Apelles glazed in a manner of his own, using a varnish that was tinted dark; that in this way he subdued his colours and increased the depth of his shadows. John Opie was also persuaded that Apelles was a superb colourist, since he was so greatly praised in high quarters. His Coan *Venus*, for example, received the admiration of age after age, and Cicero emphatically extolled its colouring. It was copied by Dorotheus, and

the copy was substituted for the damaged original in the temple of Cæsar.

Lord Bacon probably confused Apelles with Zeuxis when he wrote in his *Essays:* "There is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion. A man cannot tell whether Apelles or Albert Dürer were the more trifler; whereof the one would make a personage by geometrical proportions, the other by taking the best parts out of divers faces, to make one excellent."

Apelles has also been compared with Correggio, who, like his predecessor, lived in a period of creative decline; and like his successor, Apelles resorted to the last refinements of his art in order to combine attainment of effect with the touch of exquisite finish. His *Venus*, already mentioned, long after his time was sold to the Emperor Augustus for the equivalent of one hundred thousand dollars. Not a mean price for an old masterpiece!

Apelles understood the technic of glazing, and therefore knew how to produce the illusion of luminosity and the chant of harmony. He used his thin dark glaze for more than one purpose; with it he warmed cold areas; with it he broke sharp and hard contrasts which he found again in places for purposes of accent; with it he suggested unity, and at the same time protected his pigments from atmospheric gases, moisture, and dust. Knowing so much about the glaze, it is hard to believe that he knew nothing of the scumble.

While not much is definitely known of his colour, it must be inferred from what is known of his process that he understood, at least in a practical way, the laws of optics, the range and limitations of his materials, the uselessness of burdening his art with the handicap of a faulty method, the added strength and beauty of one colour when seen through or within another; and that therefore his reputation as a colourist was deserved, especially as he is known to have worked with a simple palette. It would appear also that he was a good suggestionist—well acquainted with the laws of sacrifice—and that, according to his own words, he *excelled in knowing when to stop.*

In general, it is believed that he sought the larger, permanent truths which he preferred to the smaller and fortuitous; that he was efficient in his knowledge of the laws of contrast, including those of surface light and body luminosity; that he was a good judge of balance, and that he was the greatest master of composition among the ancients. It was during his time that painting was particularly devoted to the fine execution of composition; and perhaps it then reached its apex in beauty and grace.

Speaking of the work of this man, Pliny says: "In his portrait of Alexander in the character of Jupiter, the fingers seem to shoot forward, and the lightning to be out of the picture." This refers to the *Ceraunophorus*, "dedicated in the temple of Diana at Ephesus and for which," according to

Opie's *Lectures*, "Alexander gave Apelles nearly £50,000 sterling." To Fuseli, this portrait personified "superhuman ambition."

An interesting reference to the work of Apelles which, in connection with other material, throws sidelights on ancient art, is made in *The True History of the Conquest of Mexico*, by Captain Bernal Diaz del Castillo, one of the conquerors, written in 1568:

> . . . The gold and silversmiths' work both in cast metal and by the hammer, and excel, as do the lapidaries and painters. The engravers execute first-rate works, with their fine instruments of iron, especially upon emeralds, whereon they represent all the acts of the holy passion of our Redeemer and Saviour Jesus Christ, in such a manner that those who had not seen them execute it, would not believe that such works could be done by Indians; insomuch that according to my judgment, that famous painter of ancient times the renowned Apelles, or the modern ones named Michael Angelo and Berruguete, and another a native of Burgos who is in great fame, being as they say a second Apelles, could not with their subtle pencils equal the works which are done by three Mexican artists named Andres de Aquino, Juan de la Cruz, and El Crespillo.

No one questions that art has its periods of rise and decline. There is something wavelike or rhythmical in its progress. Its continuity is not so much disrupted as obscured. So in discussing

the decay of Greek art following the time of Alexander, the story cannot be told in treating one phase of the phenomenon. Its decadence did not move in a uniform manner; and its lowest stage was far from death. In both technic and spirit, it seems to have passed on to the old masters and maybe it persists today in the work of the modern masters. Among the painter-folk, as others, the masses may be swayed by folly in seeking strange gods, following freakish fashions and false principles; yet always a few are guided somewhat by reason or "the word." These are the chosen faithful who heed the large laws, adhere to good maxims, and keep the covenant.

James Barry, in one of his lectures on the history of painting, says:

Though nothing remains of Phidias or his contemporaries, except the basso-relievos on the frieze of the temple of Minerva at Athens, and, perhaps, a few other subordinate fragments [as, for example, the Elgin marbles now in the British Museum] (all the greater works, both in painting and sculpture, having been long since miserably destroyed), yet no intelligent man will ever be inclined to question the extraordinary excellence which has been ascribed to them. Every doubt will be removed when we consider the particulars specified, the universal consent, and the decided judgment of many of those who have given this testimony, and, above all, when we consider the very great excellence of the works which we have remaining, executed by the disciples and successors of those

greater artists, in times when the art is said to have been gradually declining and losing its most valuable qualities.

Beginning in the second half of the fourth century B.C., the period of decline is marked by the waning of idealism and the striving for extreme naturalism. This decline culminated in mosaic art which found so much favour in the decorating of Roman houses. The finest known example of this style is the spearful picture of the battle of Issus when Alexander vanquished the Third Darius. It is believed, however, that this is merely a copy of a picture executed at Alexandria.

Protogenes of Rhodes, a contemporary of Apelles, while also a great painter, had the obstinate fault of overelaboration. He is said to have worked eleven years on one painting which he finished with four separate and complete glazes, after having glazed it countless times in parts.

This artist was both sculptor and painter, noted for the high finish and delicate detail of all his work. All which is remarkable when it is remembered that "until his fiftieth year he supported himself by painting ships, then decorated with fanciful devices." He and Nicias of Athens had traits in common, although the Athenian excelled in the feeling with which he painted female figures and the forms of dogs—an unusual blend of artistic talent—besides which, he was more skilled in encaustics. It was this same Nicias who is said

to have been employed by Praxiteles to embellish (?) his statues with colour.

Calades went to the simple scenes of everyday life for his subjects; and for that reason he has been called the precursor of modern *genre*. Other famous painters of this period were Antiphilus of Egypt, rated by Quintilian as one of the greatest painters of his time; Marcus Ludius, who won renown purely as a landscapist; Theon of Samos, celebrated for the action of his work; and Aetion, of whom comparatively little is known.

With this necessarily incomplete, but formidable, array of distinguished painters, together with the inevitable horde of trailers and copyists, the Greeks had some reason for claiming the invention of painting as they understood it and as we understand it.

It is true, as has been intimated, that relatively little is known of their local colouring, etc. Much of our information has been drawn from obscure sources, from fragmentary references and later imitations; yet all these things may be so well woven together that the blank places in the fabric can be filled in fairly well with conjecture founded on a thorough knowledge of the art.

Even those who decry Greek painting admit that the Greeks had a wonderful play of pictorial fancy, a fine perception of light and shade and of colour-harmony. It is conceded by all that they excelled in exquisite draughtsmanship and rhythm of line; that for action, beauty, and skillful ar-

rangement in composition, they have never been equalled; that they had a wide range of subject, —were masters of fresco-technic in wall-painting, and of tempera technic for panels; and that, at the best period of their art, they were masters of painting with dry wax-sticks: burning the colour into carefully prepared surfaces.

And since the Greeks achieved a splendour in architecture, sculpture, and literature unequalled at any other time in the history of civilization, it is not likely that they failed in painting, especially when we note the symmetry and balance shown in the decorative work on vases, etc., admittedly executed by inferior artists; and when we remember that it was from Greek art that the Renaissance drew its inspiration.

Thus it is reasonable to assume that Hellenic painting followed the known laws of development; that it rose to a high state; that it fell into evil ways; and that it finally passed off the stage to reappear elsewhere. Times affected the artists' ideals, which ran the gamut: now high and pure; again basely sensual and flippant. The work of these painters has totally perished; but it was strong enough to make an impression that has not entirely faded through centuries of misfortune.

There are two valuable sources of information concerning the manner of their work: first, the Pompeian paintings, done by skilled workmen merely, and not always intended as copies, which, nevertheless, are known to reflect in a measure

the style if not the spirit of the originals; second, many painted vases, also done by inferior hands, the work of which however shows charm of execution, beauty, power of glaze, and considerable facility of colour. On black ground the red figures are set off with accessories of red, yellow, violet, green, blue, and gold. Many of these vases still extant were trophies of the Panathenaic games held at Athens. The exact years of award can be told of some of these trophies by the archon inscribed on them. This fixes the period of which they were true specimens of art. Then by comparing these with the large number of undated vases, much additional information may be obtained.

The so-called Romantic painting blossomed to its fullest during the Fifth Period. The campaigns of Alexander had revealed the gorgeous East to the Greeks. Luxury and opulence—twin vampires ever stalked by decay—had whetted their taste for picturesqueness and romance in art. Allegorical figures had supplanted the ideal types of deities. Character-studies, which imply the faculty of close comparative observation, slowly came into fashion. Following the development of this keen faculty, or concomitant with it, arose the power of generalization; and this made composite portraits artistically possible; it gave birth to new types created from a number of individuals, as referred to by Bacon. Noted painters were becoming scarce. The imaginative power was in

rapid decline. It became the custom to copy and to modify old masterpieces.

Despite all these marks of decadence, the Hellenistic sculptors were yet able to produce such pieces as the *Dying Gaul* and the *Belvedere Apollo;* the painters still retained fine taste and excellent discrimination making for pictorial effect; and they managed their colours with increasing ease and with the utmost refinement of handling. While the spirit of art was languishing, its technic was developing.

Notwithstanding the depreciatory statements of Pliny and Petronius, we find by studying and comparing the paintings of this late period, especially those of Pompeii and Herculaneum, that although the painters went to the older models for their work, they also produced many striking pictorial effects independently and quite of their own accord. Still, this was the period of the decadence of Greek painting which overspread Rome with a gradual decay of the finer spirit in all art.

Thus we see that the Egyptian motif was historic, mysterious, majestic—static with hierarchic dignity; that of the Etruscans, largely decorative; while Hellenic painting was, at its best, emotive, and therefore more purely artistic. Through classic beauty the Greeks sought to express all that was worthy in human emotions. The discovery of the emotive value of art is one of the greatest ever made by any people; and, as I have said,

it is of unique interest to us because it was destined to become our heritage.

Materials Used by Greek Painters

There are many reasons for believing, some of which have been given, that painting as a fine art was highly developed in Greece; and one of the best is the abundance of painters' materials mentioned and described by ancient authors.

This is the situation: Let us assume the total destruction of all our paintings; the survival of mutilated catalogues of a few galleries, and the damaged price-lists of one or two artist supply-houses; add to these several of the muddy caricatures, called copies, vomited every year by the Metropolitan; some tattered "Baedekers"; a number of scattered pages torn from books on modern painting; and a few battered pieces of our sculpture. Then something similar to our source of knowledge of Greek painting would be available to students trying to scan the art of our times through the haze of intervening centuries. Even then, our source of information concerning Greek art would be still richer than that possible to the condition assumed. For the relics which we have of Greek art are on an average so incomparably superior to any fragments which might be left of our own that the hypothetical parallel is wide and vague.

Beginning with media, those most generally

used by Hellenic painters appear to have been gum and glue; but egg, resins, oils, and varnishes were also commonly employed. Water-colours were understood and managed from early times. Wax was not only used in encaustics, but for protective and other glazes as well.

The materials painted on were diverse: wood, stone, clay, plaster, parchment, and canvas. Of these the most favoured were wooden tablets or panels, which when painted were variously framed and encased in walls. Of artists' tools, the palette and easel were similar to our own. The pigments used by the earlier painters were mostly earths, such as the white of Melos, the yellow ochre of Attica, the red earth of Pontus, called sinopis, and the artificial darks made of mixtures with lampblack.

It is probable that the best artists were conservative in the use of colours; and that they restricted themselves, for the most part, to the simpler palettes. The introduction of new pigments, more and more refined, was continuous however until, and very possibly later than, the time of Apelles. Then as now, no doubt, it was endeavoured to conceal artistic failure with scheme and colour, or with mere freakishness. Following the period of Zeuxis and Polygnotus, the number and refinement of pigments rapidly increased.

"So great, indeed," says Westropp, "is the number of pigments mentioned by ancient authors, and such the beauty of them, that it is very doubt-

ful whether, with all the help of modern science, modern artists possess any advantage in this respect over their predecessors."

Wornum gives a very efficient list of colours used by the ancient artists. This is made up of reds, yellows, greens, blues, purples, browns, black, and white. A casual glance over this list, which as given here is far from complete, may be surprising to many persons who paint, as well as to others who do not.

Red : vermilion, or the red sulphid of mercury, known as cinnabar, and once called *minium* (from which the word *miniature* is derived; Vitruvius and Pliny); cinnabaris, or the resinous fluid of *Calamus draco*, vulgarly called "dragon's blood," mentioned by Pliny and Dioscorides; red oxides of lead and iron; red ochres; sinopis, a fine red earthy pigment; the red protosulphuret of arsenic, etc. In the opinion of Sir Humphry Davy, crimson was made by combining sandarac with a calcined red. In order to heighten the effect of this crimson, a purple glaze was used, the medium of which was a white transparent resin obtained from the sandarac-tree.

Yellow : orange ochre, or the hydrated peroxid of iron. This powerful and durable pigment was used as the base of several yellows. It is said that the Greeks employed a great variety of ochres found at different places, but that preference was given to the Attic.

Green : A protoxid of copper silicate, called

chrysocolla, was highly favoured; it was derived from decomposed copper ores; and its range of tone was from a bluish-green to a sky-blue. An artificial green was made by treating cyanosite (blue vitriol as found in nature) with a yellow dye. There were also inferior greens composed of clays and earths.

Blue: Of blue there were many varieties: Alexandrian, derived from the silicates of copper and lime; and Armenian, probably ultramarine (lapis lazuli); these were most highly regarded; but the carbonate of copper, oxids of tin and cobalt, indigo, and others, were known and used. Pliny's "sapphirus" most likely was lapis lazuli.

Purple: Having so many kinds of reds and blues, the Greeks also had, presumably, many varieties of purple. Several are mentioned by early authors. Vitruvius speaks of hysginum, which he describes as a colour between scarlet and purple. A fine white clay steeped in a purple dye secreted by two species of the genus *Murex* was much used and highly prized. This animal secretion enabled the colourists to produce almost any shade from minium to blue. *Murex trunculus* and *Purpura hæmastoma* were commonly used in the manufacture of purple. *Murex trunculus* was used in ancient Tyre; *Purpura hæmastoma* is used even today by the fishermen of Minorca in dyeing their shirts. There are numerous passages in the Homeric poems referring to purple and its uses, showing that it was well known to the Greeks

in remote times. Honey was often made use of to thicken thin dyes. Red ochre was mixed with the blue oxid of copper. The celebrated Tyrian dye was combined with others, not only for colour effects, but for the fixing, or the making of fast colours.

Brown: The browns were derived from burnt ochres, oxids of iron and manganese, and ochres mixed with black.

Black: Black, as found in nature, came from earths, the deposits of tar, and from the secretion of the cuttle-fish—a fluid known as sepia; while the artificial black was manufactured from carbonized wine-lees, lampblack, calcined ivory, etc. Pliny mentions *atramentum indicum*, which is known by us perhaps as India ink.

White: This was obtained solely from earths found in Africa, the island of Melos, and elsewhere.

There were three principal methods of using these colours: distemper, glazing, and encaustic; and there were also many others, modifications of these. Sir Humphry Davy believed that there was much in common between the Greek, Roman, and Venetian masters in their methods; their technics were similar if not exactly the same; on the whole, all were sparing in the use of florid colours, and the best of them sought their effects chiefly by means of contrast and tone.

And now, incidentally, a word on Polychromy, as related to the true art of painting! This monster was born early in the history of art, waxed

strong during the archaic period, and passed away at the height of the best epoch in Greek art, only to reappear in later and less sensitive times.

It is known that the Cnidian *Venus* of Praxiteles was not coloured; and that Phidias preferred his effects in pure marble to those of ivory and gold. He sacrificed his taste for marble in art only to the less refined demands of religion. It is only reasonable to suppose that the best Greek artists generally separated the two arts of painting and statuary. It is not likely that they wished to mar their statues with colour. They loved too well the purity of form clothed only in the gradations of shade to disfigure marble with paint. They knew too much of art, and their feelings were too refined to confuse the music of light and shadow, as it played around their divine marbles, with the blatant barbarism of premeditated stains and vulgar discolourations. It was only as art declined that the taste grew tolerant of more primitive things.

"The ancients," wrote Vitruvius at the time of Cæsar, "laboured to accomplish and render pleasing by dint of *art*, that which in the present day is obtained by means of strong and gaudy colouring, and for the effect which was formerly obtained only by the skill of the artist, a prodigal expense is now substituted."

CHAPTER IX

THE ROMAN PERIOD

It has been observed that the Arts have ever been disposed to travel westward. Greece is thought to have received them from her more eastern neighbours. From the Greeks they migrated into Italy; thence they visited France, Flanders, and Holland, enlightening for a time those countries though with diminished lustre, but, as if the ocean had stopped their progress, they have for near an age stood still, and grown weak and torpid for want of motion. Let us for a moment flatter ourselves that they are still in being, and have at last arrived at this island. (Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses*, 1st ed.)

THE Latins began to establish themselves in cities at about the time when the Homeric poems were composed. Their art grew up very naturally with their political institutions, and it flourished with the full development of the Roman state.

Painting with this people had its crude beginnings as early as the eighth century B.C. As far back as the third century there were native painters of distinction, some of whom no doubt worked

independently of outside influences and laid the foundations of a distinct character which finally developed a kind of realism, not without interest and charm.

Nothing is known of the earliest sources of inspiration of this branch of art among the Latins until the Etruscan influence virtually became dominant. Other movements came in from abroad to modify it. When the Celtic tribes receded from Rome, after having destroyed Etruscan power, it is barely possible that they left a slight impress on Latin art. And when Rome became predominant in the Latin League; when she broadened her trade; and when she was beginning to feel the first awakening thrills of an ambition which soon embraced the world, she began to borrow art from other peoples, which gradually weakened the Etruscan element in her style.

Following the second Punic War, there was an influx of Greek art and artists. Thenceforward the art of Rome was subject not only to the favourable influence of Greek art but also to its vicissitudes. There was a sturdy element of realism, however, in Roman art which, although modelled after the Greek, still contained a new, or at least a different, conception. This is very well shown in sculpture. While it is true that a great deal of this in ancient Rome was done by the Greeks for their Latin clients, yet a considerable amount remained in the hands of native sculptors whose work was divided between the copying of Greek

masterpieces, and the doing of original things, for the most part in a kind of Greek style. Nevertheless, wherever the Roman spirit is discernable, while it lacks something of the Greek idealism and achieves something of Hellenic dignity and excellence, it reveals another element of its own, or a lifelike realism.

There is a parallelism apparent in painting as shown by the frescoes of Herculaneum and Pompeii. For while much of this work was done by inferior Greek craftsmen during the Hellenistic decline, a certain amount of it was done by Roman painters whose work reveals the same realistic characteristics, so unmistakable in Roman sculpture. A few of the frescoes of this period, done by native painters, resemble modern impressionism; while the decorations of the Rospigliosi have been compared with the Fragonards.

Indeed, a certain indefinable spirit of realism seems indigenous to Italian soil; and this spirit became more pronounced than ever when it received a stimulation from the art of the Eastern Empire.

The Roman republic with all its wealth and power was never able to approximate the perfect art of the great Greek epoch. And Constantine failed to arrest the decline which continued down through the age of the Antonines to the rise of Christianity. The flood of barbarism rising on the one side, and the tides of a new religion flowing in from the other, submerged the last remnants of classic art.

CHAPTER X

EARLY CHRISTIAN PAINTING

EARLY Christian painting was born in the gloom of the Catacombs. Although it issued forth, spreading far and wide, it was never able to shake off the repulsive characteristics of its hideous origin. It triumphantly covered walls with unsightly saints represented in paint or in gilded and gaudy mosaic work.

The primitive Christians had an aversion to pictures and images; and they were modest enough to refrain from trying to depict the eternal attributes of God. They lacked the sentiment, the imagination, and the power to render sublimity; and later when they tried to express majesty, they merely caricatured the human passions. As they became bolder with power, they symbolized the Redeemer with pictures of Orpheus and the Good Shepherd. Eventually, the face of Christ was given the features of Jove or of Apollo. Their Prophets resembled Greek philosophers dressed in the pallium; shepherds of the Magi were given Phrygian robes and caps; the Virgin was put in the chlamys. Their painting, bad as it was,

steadily degenerated; and even their mosaics of the fourth century appeared to be resurrected from the Catacombs.

"The tree is known by its fruit." Art depends on prototypes. Pagan art had declined but its manner persisted with these early Christian painters. They changed subjects but retained in the Catacombs the manner of the Pompeian wall-paintings. The miserable dogmas of the new religion held the poor weakened spirit of pagan art by the throat and refused it any freedom. The grip was even tighter on the neck of sculpture.

This is the art that actually filled in the lapse between the old pagan and the later period of Christian art proper, or between the Classic period and the Gothic. The painters of this melancholy time despised the human form; they regarded the body as sinful and therefore unfit to represent their ideas of divinity. To these stupid but pious beings, only the soul was pure; and to represent its ideals they chose such symbols as the alpha and omega, the cross, the blessed lamb, the palm branch, and the fish: rather ghastly old symbols to stand for ideas or attributes of the new divinity!

Naturally, some pagan ideas here and there crept into the works of a few painters at this period, but they were given a new significance. Roman art was corrupted. Ideals did not exist, and Nature was robbed of beauty. Grace and pleasing proportion disappeared in the monstrous attempts at spiritual grandeur.

During the decline of the Western Roman Empire, the Byzantine influence permeated European painting, as indeed it did nearly all other branches of art, especially architecture and sculpture. Its formalism became too crystallized to permit further development. Its one happy effect was a kind of break, in the form of gorgeous splendour, put on the early Christian devolution of art; but it failed utterly to inject life. It sought dignity and repose and achieved little more than a bedecked formalism. This at least had some pleasing features, while the early Christian work had none. The Byzantine formalism moulded figures and prescribed attitudes. It drew elongated forms, and noses as thin as razors, narrow oval faces, large eyes, small chins, and, generally, evoked lifeless pose. The emotions were all solemnly dead. Only in some of the miniatures of this doleful period were exhibited any of the emotive values.

Here again the subjects remain early Christian and only the manner Byzantine. Christs and Virgins, swarms of angels in dazzling glory! they were all there and everywhere, together with stately thrones, stiff, bearded old saints or sinners in their dotage and covered with impossible robes suggesting not even the skeletons of forms beneath.

In the eighth century A.D., the awful bigots destroyed as much as they could of the art of the East. The old glories were hateful in the sight of the new god lately risen to power. This un-

holy onslaught of the ferocious iconoclasts dispersed the artisans and the artists, who thereupon migrated to Western and Central Europe. In its new environment this Byzantine element arose to great eminence, especially in miniature work, and it succeeded in driving the Gaelic workmen out until they kept a foothold only in Ireland.

Thus from the eighth to the tenth century the crafts and many of the arts were in the hands of the Byzantines. Certain styles of Celtic ornamentation persisted in the North countries; but Southern, Western, and Central Europe were dominated by Byzantium, which controlled the ivory-carving, metal-work, and enamelling. The effects of Moorish and Saracenic influences need not detain us here, since painting was not one of their arts, as we understand it.

The Romanesque Period

During the Romanesque period architecture dominated all the other arts. That is to say, Art was subordinate to the Church. Following the fall of the Roman Empire and the shifting of world power to the northward, art was almost wholly in the hands of the religionists. The chief industry was the building of churches. Individualism of expression scarcely existed; the practice of the fine arts was governed by church traditions; painting was mostly done by priests and monks;

it had become shrivelled by conventionalism and inchoate with a mixed symbolism.

The pleasing features of Byzantine art were displaced, and in their stead glared ugly stiffness or sad clumsiness; both painting and sculpture were in a low state; the sole link which connected the Classic and Gothic periods of art was found in ivory-carving, metal-work, and enamelling. Painting was restricted to a narrow field, such as the illuminating of missals,—which barely kept the breath of life in the art,—and the covering of church walls with impossible figures, poorly done and according to rule. It was only near the close of this period that artistic freedom began to show itself. The opening of the thirteenth century ushered in some liberty of individual expression. This was the morning of the Gothic epoch: something like summer—something like stars for the crown of midnight—something like sunlight for noon when waters should answer waters and fields should wear lilies where "blossoms not thorns, and flowers not blood should break." This was the dawn of an epoch that shed great emotions as the oak sheds its leaves.

CHAPTER XI

THE GOTHIC

ARCHITECTURE continued to influence painting profoundly in several ways. The Gothic style of the North gave birth to the art of stained-glass window-making. This no doubt affected the technic of the old masters by suggesting the possibilities of coloured glazings in painting. The painters were forced into stained-glass work; besides this, their paintings were pretty much restricted to small panels for altar-pieces.

An awakening tendency toward naturalness is noticeable in the art of this period. Nature was studied and often closely followed by the Masonic stone-carvers; and the emotions began to find a semblance of expression in painting. Figures, whether painted or carved in wood and stone, were freeing themselves from erstwhile formalism, and leaning more and more toward realism. A rational attempt was made at portraiture which was often successful. The fluid rhythm, the swinging grace, and the flowing line had become infectious in art. A new element and a fresh impulse were given to painting.

To the architecture of the South, the pure Gothic style of the North remained alien. In Italy, the result was a blend of Gothic and local characteristics. The old classic instincts of art had never entirely disappeared. Climatic requirements of a region, bathed in an abundance of light and heat, restricted the window-area and therefore widened the scope of wall-decoration. This condition was naturally favourable to the development of painting and mosaic work.

In the South, painting had retained a little of its independence. Burdened and obscured, as it had been, by the Byzantine traditions, its spirit reasserted itself at about the middle of the thirteenth century. To this effect Niccola Pisano of Pisa was one of the instruments. His fondness for antique traditions revived for the moment some of the classic spirit. Following his isolated but potent efforts, Florence and Siena protested against the lifeless Byzantine formalism; and they helped to free painting of its tyranny.

Cimabue, the alleged master of Giotto, undoubtedly did effective work in the new movement by his opposition to the stiff mannerisms of his predecessors; but he is probably overrated when called "the father of modern painting."

Giotto, with all his faults, may be ascribed with greater accuracy as the precursor of modern painters. He managed his dramatic movement with some skill; and he evinced artistic ideals. Like most of the other Italian masters of his time, he

had command of several arts. He went to Nature for his inspiration; and, like Nature, he was imitated and copied—not always with understanding.

The story of Giotto's "O," in Mr. Ruskin's opinion, whether true or mostly fiction, is somewhat indicative of the man's character. Benedict XI., it is said, sent a legate "to test Giotto's ability"; the courtier requested a specimen of the painter's work. "Giotto took a sheet of paper, and a brush dipped in red, and firmly pressing his elbow to his side so that the lower limb of the arm might act as the branch of a compass, he completed with one sweep a perfect circle. 'Here is my drawing,' said Giotto. 'Am I to have no other than this?' replied the courtier, scenting a joke in the manner of the artist. 'Enough it is and more than enough!' was the answer. The Pope, a better judge than his envoy, admitted the superiority of Giotto; and the story, repeated from mouth to mouth, became the foundation of a pun on the word *tondo*. For it became common to say of men of dull wit or of coarse character, that they were rounder than the 'O' of Giotto." (*History of Painting*, Crowe and Cavalcaselle.)

A study of this man's work reveals that it was of nearer kin to the best traits of Giovanni Pisano's than to those of Cimabue's. Giovanni had abandoned the elder Pisano's somewhat passive classicism for the more virile and emotive Gothic.

Indeed, the genius of Giotto was a flower of the Gothic art. This painter did not rely on the

antique but rather on his own outlook upon his surroundings. His work is alive with a love of truth, and it thrills with broad and generous sympathies. It may be said to be the connecting link between thirteenth-century classicism and painting of the modern era. He cleverly subordinated his pattern-effects to the narrative of his decorative painting; and thus he was able to make his way tactfully between opposing qualities. Although poor in colour and weak in light and shade, as compared with later work, he was yet strong and sure in line, rich in sense of proportion, and well balanced in mass-effect. Moreover, he showed his artistic breeding, so to speak, in the modest self-restraint which avoided overemphasis and exaggeration; and his action while always graceful could never be called weak.

With the passing of Giotto, painting suffered a temporary eclipse; and the spirit of his work seemed to enter that of the sculptor Andrea Pisano, whose reliefs in stone and bronze strongly suggest certain characteristics of Giotto's paintings. There was the same disregard of stupid conventionalities; there was a similar sincerity; the same obvious love of beauty is apparent; and through beauty, a like attempt is evident at the expression of emotive values. His bronze gates at Florence are perhaps the best example of his style.

The most famous of Giotto's pupils was Andrea del Cione, often referred to as "Orcagna." He, too, was the master of several arts: being a sculp-

tor, a painter, an architect, and a goldsmith. The Loggia de' Lanzi in Florence is said to have been built from his plans. His is the superb fresco of *The Last Judgment* in S. Maria Novella; and his also the richly sculptured Gothic tabernacle of Or San Michele at Florence.

In Siena, Duccio di Buoninsegna paralleled in a measure the vibrant work of the Florentines. He also rebelled against Byzantine rigidity, put some life into his figures, and some structure under their garments. His arrangement of draperies was artistic; and he expressed emotion in his faces; but he seemed unable to cope with the requirements of individualism. Among his successors were such men as Taddeo Gaddi and the Lorenzetti.

On the whole, however, the Sienese school was rather too metaphysical. It went in so much for soul that it failed with the body. It lacked the vitality of the Florentine school, and fell by the wayside.

Now we approach with reverence the most lovable painter of them all, Fra Giovanni Angelico da Fiesole, whom we like to call simply Fra Angelico. As all the world knows, this thoroughly humanized Dominican monk occupies a unique position in the history of painting; he was "not in the roll of common men." He was not only the last and greatest Florentine painter of the Gothic period, but he was the first great painter of the Early Renaissance. In the words of Rey-

nolds: "The works of those who have stood the tests of ages have a claim to that respect and veneration to which no modern can pretend. The duration and stability of their fame are sufficient to evince that it has not been suspended upon the slender thread of fashion and caprice, but bound to the human heart by every tie of sympathetic approbation."

The genius of this great Christian painter combined the noblest elements of the Florentine and Sienese schools into one of his own. In his freedom of grouping, his dramatic instincts, his sincerity, and his inspiration, he suggests Giotto while surpassing him and rising above his primitive simplicity. Something similar may be said of his superiority over the Sienese in his incorporation in his work of the best elements of that school. He lacked none of the pure and lofty sentiment or spiritual depth of emotion while making a systematic study of the antique and of nature. He approached the human form as a true artist; he was first to paint the Christ child naked; the first Italian to paint landscapes from nature. He used living models for his nudes; he studied aërial perspective; and he embodied classical elements in his architectural backgrounds. His brushes robbed the Hybla bees, and left them honeyless.

Thus did religion at a later period tend to restore what it had almost destroyed on the overthrow of

Pagan idolatry. For the new-born zeal of the first Christians sought to efface every monument of the antique religion, throwing down the statues, destroying the mosaics and pictures, effacing every memorial, and razing the ancient temples, or converting them into Christian churches.

The Church of Rome has favoured the arts in a remarkable manner. The ceremonial and decorations of the altar have been contrived with great felicity. He is insensible to beauty who, being a painter, does not there catch ideas of light and shade and colour. The Gothic or rich Roman architecture, the carved screen, the statues softened by a subdued light, form altogether a magnificent scene. The effects of light and colour are not matters of accident. The painted glass of the high window represents to the superficial observer no more than the rich garments of the figures painted there. But the combination of colours evinces science; the yellows and greens, in due proportion with the crimsons and blues, throw beams of an autumnal tint among the shafts and pillars, and colour the volumes of rising incense. . . .

In short the priests in their rich habiliments, studiously arranged for effect,—the costume of the monks of the order of St. Francis and the Capucines,—the men and women from the country, and the mendicants prostrate in the churches, and in circumstances as to light and shade, and colour, nowhere else to be seen,—have been, and are, the studies of the Italian painters. (Sir Charles Bell.)

CHAPTER XII

ITALIAN MASTERS, RENAISSANCE

FLORENCE was the homestead of the Renaissance of Painting; and the Brancacci Chapel might be called its nursery. The frescoes of Masaccio have supplied inspiration to many generations of painters. His pigments held a kind of reflex and flush of dawn which overflowed in splendid shadows like spilt wine.

Masaccio was the first Italian to endow the nude with its fuller possibilities of strength and beauty; he clothed his figures with emotion as with raiment. In composition, he broke away from the linear scheme and traditions of relief; and he put his figures where they belonged in the planes of the landscape. He invested them with dignity and dressed them without stint of material in classic grace. In a word, he fulfilled some of the promises of Giotto at their best.

It is interesting to students of the older technic to read in Crowe and Cavalcaselle that

> Masaccio used transparent colours, through which the white intonaco is visible, particularly in the pictures of the upper courses. In the lower series his

facility is more apparent than elsewhere, the flesh lights having more body, the shadows being more powerfully glazed, and the execution generally more careful. . . . The whole was evidently prepared in spacious masses on white ground. Colours of a fluid texture were swept over the surface with great speed and dexterity. The broad shadows were glazed with warm and transparent tones and fused through the semitones into equally broad lights. The flesh tints thus gained a bright though soft and golden tinge, and relief was obtained by the perfect juxtaposition of tints rather than by careful minuteness of stippling.

Masaccio had many followers,—chief amongst them was Fra Filippo Lippi, who seems to have been more fond of life than of religion. His palette was a song: he painted "lips to love with, eyes for tears." He preferred to express the sensuous emotions of a robust peasantry rather than spiritual ideals such as thrill the work of Fra Angelico. Realism, beauty, and joyousness leapt from his palette, and were gay.

Veneziano, fond of naturalism, a fine technician, and clever in rendering movement, is said to have introduced oil-painting into Italy. Uccello, so-called "from his fondness for painting birds," was a good animal painter, but an arbitrary colourist; he gave much attention to the laws of perspective, and impressed himself strongly on his contemporaries. The paintings of all these men, having shaken off church rule, began to tell the story of light and laughter, often in the colour of deciduous days.

Gozzoli, a follower of Fra Angelico, went to contemporary life for the scenes of his frescoes. He represented native types, customs, and manners. Realizing, as Lord Houghton says, that "a man's best things are nearest him, lie close about his feet," he sought the nearer truths of nature and rendered them with liveliness and charm. Passions blew from his mind as winds from the South.

Botticelli "is the only contemporary whom Leonardo da Vinci mentions by name in his treatise on painting." He shed colour as the grape its wine,—both improve by time. His paints are sweeter than sleep and softer than summer air. He was one of the arts' great masters who made light to shudder and burn afresh. This painter was steeped in learning, and very naturally he had strong leanings toward classic ideals. He knew that in painting a man is not necessarily on oath; and, as Burke says, we must "pardon something to the spirit of liberty." His genius was a blend of vague worlds—luminous and gem-like—and of a yearning as of winds and waters. He was both pagan and Christian; and he used his colours chiefly to intensify his decorative lines. He was so poetic in his expression of the human form, of the rhythm of the dance and of fluttering draperies, that in the presence of his pictures one feels surrounded by spirits of the golden age. The pattern effect of his compositions is fascinating.

Filippino, son of the elder Lippi and pupil of

Botticelli, possessed many exquisite qualities of the real master; but they ran to overdecorative effects and too much detail, as is shown by some frescoes which he completed in the Brancacci Chapel. His colouring was rich and his expression fine,—if anything perhaps too dainty.

Pietro della Francesca was the precursor of modern open-air painting with its echoing woodlands, fields of summer grass, and wild winds against a stormy cloud. He combined qualities of the Umbrian and Florentine schools. He was master of glaze and perspective; and he had a refined sense of beauty.

Luca Signorelli, a pupil of Francesca, excelled in the expression of strength and action in the figures of passionate crowds. Beauty and texture of the nude form, especially of the female, escaped him. His drawing was rather hard and his colours dry.

Pietro Perugino was typical of the Umbrian school; and he was also its greatest master. His success in space composition was second only to that of his pupil, Raphael. The Umbrians, however, never achieved any considerable artistic independence. This school at its best was never credited as being much more than a reflection or modification of the Sienese and Florentine schools. It neglected form, line, and movement for tenderness of sentiment and intensity of religious expression.

Pinturicchio, who belonged to the same school,

was rather strong in composition; but he was too much inclined toward the love of splendour in colouring for the decorative limits of the fresco.

Squarcione founded the Paduan school on the study of Grecian antiques. His greatest pupil was Mantegna. This painter was an accomplished antique scholar, whose works were classic in style, sculpturesque and noble. Indeed, Mantegna's frescoes of contemporary life are even better than his other productions. This school influenced Milanese and Venetian painting in the fifteenth century; but the Venetians soon took a glorious course of their own. "In no other painter's works," says Champlin, "are to be found so strange a mixture of classic feeling, realism, and science, combined with rare dramatic power and intensity of life, as in those of Mantegna."

The Bellini brothers, Giovanni and Gentile, were painting at the dawn of Venetian splendour. The flourishing mercantile republic brought forth a new style of art. Florence was the soil of humanism; there colour was subordinate to line; and the picture, in a sense, was the woven raiment of the painter's thought. In Venice all was different. Pomp and luxury were as vibrant as fire or the lute-strings of love. There were colour, atmosphere, and music. The shudder of water was felt by the poet; and the painter knew the immeasurable tremor of the sea. Venice demanded of art not the expression of thought and knowledge, as such, but rather a sensuous quality

which should express in colour the poetry of every-day life. And thus the Venetians became the first great European school of real colourists. With them colour was a living flame, an exaltation of light, a spirit of wet ways enchanted with the dreams of gardens. The Venetians thought in colour and studied its appearance in nature, its possibilities in art, and its powers in pigment. In these things they have not been excelled. It has been said that Antonello da Messina brought oil-colours to Venice. This is doubtful; but what is certain is that Venice developed the master painter, as succeeding ages have understood him, in whose technic perhaps no material improvement has been made since.

Gentile Bellini, like Vittore Carpaccio, painted processionals of Venetian life. Giovanni's work was rather monumental in character. His style was dignified, and he essayed the type rather than the individual.

In this remarkable school there were other early masters justly famous. I shall mention only two more: Carlo Crivelli and Cima da Conegliano. Carlo's work rivals that of the early Flemish masters in careful detail. The altar-pieces by Cima are fine and colourful. He touched the cold lips of saints with human breath,—mingled immortality with death, and made both alive.

As the fifteenth century was drawing to a close, almost every city in Italy had a school of painting, and most of them could boast of masters. At the

beginning of the sixteenth century, painting had become a thoroughly independent art, although it still decorated architecture.

There are certain masters of this period, as of others, too well known to be more than casually mentioned here, since nothing can be added to what all the world knows concerning them. Leonardo and Raphael belong to this group.

Leonardo da Vinci was fed on the "milk of every Muse." He belonged to Central Italy; and he ushered in the greatest period of Italian art. This great epoch witnessed technical mastery, classic perfection, and ideal beauty of expression. The genius of Leonardo was universal. Two centuries of painting were before him; and his work incorporated all that was best in what had gone before. Even more than that, the unconscious processes of his genius perfected the previous good qualities of the art and welded them into a personal style of his own. He was master of line, colour, movement, emotion, pure beauty, strength, and tenderness. He endowed the flesh with spirit and the spirit with a longing that aspires. In his all too few finished works, there were large light and no barren tones, for he seemed to draw upon the gold of all the season's wealth.

Raphael's genius was also broadly eclectic and capable of making its very own all that was best in art. In the words of Johnson: "The true, strong, and sound mind is the mind that can embrace equally great things and small." Such was

Raphael's. His colours were as soft as fallen rain. His work strives with death and grows stronger through the years. Music came from his brushes; and his palette gave forth a flame as of candles on a shrine. It was however in the fresco that his genius found full expression; for he lacked something in his oils which Correggio had in abundance. Unfortunately for the evolution of painting, his work has been so long regarded as the very acme of perfection by the academic teacher and lecturer that it may almost be considered as a depressant rather than a stimulus.

Michael Angelo, the Titan, made the reign of Leo X. immortal. He has been called the "Luther of the Reformation of Painting"; and his female figures have been referred to as the "breeders of giants." In fact, he was, first, a sculptor, second, a painter, and after that, other marvellous characters. According to Vasari, he painted but one picture in oils,—exclaiming in a mood of disgust that the technic was only fit for women and children. However that may be, his brushes were as vital as the sparks which leapt from his chisel, and they reveal the same passionate command of the human figure. I do not know the faults in his work, but I am often told that it has many. His grandeur of design fills my space of conception. I can understand, however, that his colour did not equal that of Leonardo and the great Venetians. His ideal no doubt was sculptural rather than pictorial; for his forms shall ever "float about the

threshold of an age." The mind staggers beneath the visions which he put into shapes and suggestions and which he liberated in a lordly manner upon the illimitable years.

Fra Bartolommeo and Andrea del Sarto, Florentine painters of this period, achieved considerable renown. Bartolommeo, an ascetic, was perhaps only second to Leonardo as the greatest of the Florentine school. He did some excellent altar-pieces in his early career; but on the whole, it may be said, his was a beamless light. There is something in his art that makes one feel as though sitting alone in a dark cave drinking chill wine. Andrea, except for his lack of feeling, leaned toward the Venetian style with his sense of colour, of beauty and grace, and with his good drawing.

Correggio, of Northern Italy, was the most typical master of the late Renaissance. The nervous quality of his work has been widely noted. His sunlight was filled with floating shades which suggest dreams beyond sunset. In a word, his work was intensely emotional.

The pictures of this extraordinary man, though full of the most exquisite tones of colour, and the tenderest gradations, are never insipid; and though descending into the most intense depths of shadow, are without the least appearance of blackness. These defects he has avoided by retaining sufficient portions of strong, harsh colour, and cutting outline, in many parts of the work; nor are the sensations of colour ever excluded from his shadows; on the contrary, his

greatest darks are full of luminous, warm, and transparent tones. This rendering of colour subservient to the purposes of light and shade, with still greater effects of breadth, was carried to perfection by Titian, one of the founders of the Venetian school, who, though commencing like Correggio with the most delicate tints in the masses of light, and excluding darkness from his shadows, has extended this principle by combining his hot and cold colours in larger portions. (Burnet.)

Reynolds was a great admirer of Ludovico Carracci. In his *Discourses* he says:

His unaffected breadth of light and shadow, the simplicity of colouring, which, holding its proper rank, does not draw aside the least part of the attention from the subject, and the solemn effect of that twilight which seems diffused over his pictures, appear to me to correspond with grave and dignified subjects, better than the more artificial brilliancy of sunshine which enlightens the pictures of Titian.

Giorgione was a sixteenth-century master of the first rank. His figures fell in with their surroundings. He was the first of his time to make the background a real component part of his picture. He was an idealist of great imagination.

The true artist must be enough of the philosopher to see Nature in the abstract as she stands revealed through law. In rendering the ideal, he represents Nature in her most perfect state. Nature, for example, makes no two oaks exactly alike; and yet all oaks conform to a central, organic

plan. If one were to draw an ideal oak he would have to know this central plan which conforms to a composite drawing of all oaks. Thus the province of art is to understand this central design of things. And this is what Giorgione did. The work of Palma, one of his contemporaries, was deeply influenced by his example. Palma excelled as a painter of women,—of bodies blushing with life, and veins that hesitate with gracious blue.

Titian, of course, stood at the head of Venetian painting. He garnered the very quintessence of colour with a kind of fierce reluctance. He painted mysteries of the fervid will, slain laughter and wind-blown hair, and woman with just a hint of floral sadness in her smile. He had overcome the perplexities of his art, and as a colourist, perhaps, he has never been surpassed. The greatest Tuscans did not excel him in composition, and few equalled him in the expression of emotion or the rhythm of line. In portraiture he ranks with Rembrandt and Velasquez.

In the latter part of the sixteenth century, Tintoretto and Veronese upheld the great traditions of the Venetian school. Tintoretto's motto was: "The design of Michael Angelo, the colour of Titian." He was master of the human form, of light and shade, and colour he made to sing with lips of flame.

Of all the extraordinary geniuses that have practised the art of painting, for wild, capricious, extravagant,

and fantastical inventions, for furious impetuosity and boldness in the execution of his work, there is none like Tintoretto; his strange whimsies are even beyond extravagance, and his works seem to be produced rather by chance, than in consequence of any previous design, as if he wanted to convince the world that the art was a trifle, and of the most easy attainment. (Vasari.)

Emerson says: "By necessity, by proclivity, and by delight, we all quote." Let us say therefore, in the words of Johnson, that, "Whatever is done skilfully appears to be done with ease; and Art, when it is once matured to habit, vanishes from observation."

Veronese was strong in composition and an expert in the mechanical part of his art; and he too had a mind of many colours. He rioted in figures, in processions, in miracles, and in martyrdoms. Unfortunately, he directed his efforts more to surface gorgeousness than to the illumination of deeper significances.

Canaletto, the elder, stood at the head of a new *genre* which appeared toward the end of the seventeenth century. He was an objective painter of architecture and detail, while handling massed light and shade successfully. Francesco Guardi chose similar motifs, but was broader; his atmosphere was truer and his tones more silvery than those of Canaletto.

Tiepolo was the last of the Venetian masters who, agreeable to the demands of his time, painted

in the style of florid splendour. His work was mostly decorative; and although he was a great colourist, he lacked ideas.

If God should deign to speak to a painter, He would probably quote Thessalonians and say, "*Study to be quiet.*"

CHAPTER XIII

PAINTING IN THE NORTH

NO one seems to know when oil-painting was introduced into Northern Europe. Decorative oil-work was done in England as early, surely, as the eleventh century. Long before that, Aetius, a medical author writing in the year 500 A.D., recommends nut-oil as an ingredient used in the processes of gilding and encaustic painting, for the reason that when the oil dries it leaves a protective coat over the painting. Virtually ever since that time both varnishes and drying-oils have been used more or less in the processes of painting.

The *Lucca MS.*, written three or four hundred years after the time of Aetius, contains "a recipe for a transparent varnish composed of linseed oil and resin." A book called *De Arte Pingendi*, written by Theophilus, a ninth-century monk, gives careful directions for a method of grinding pigments in linseed oil for painting on wooden panels which are to be dried in the sun. For the final coat he suggests a varnish composed of the gum of sandarac which has been boiled in linseed

oil. In a contemporary work by Heraclius, called *De Artibus Romanorum*, it is said that oil paintings may be dried either in the sun or by artificial heat. In addition, a method is given wherein the oxid of lead used as a dryer is mixed with the oil. R. E. Raspe published these MSS. in a small quarto volume, with notes and comments, in the year 1781. The edition was small; and I do not believe that the book has been reprinted in its original form. Copies are rare.

There is now little doubt that oil-painting has been carried on sporadically since the tenth century, although the technic evidently was very imperfect. The *Strassburg MS.* of the fourteenth or fifteenth century contains a well-known recipe for oil-colours. Oil from linseed, hempseed, or the nut was boiled with some such dryer as the sulphate of zinc. After a process of bleaching in the sun the mixture becomes "a thick consistence . . . transparent as fine crystal. And this oil dries very fast, and makes all colours beautifully clear and glossy besides. All painters are not acquainted with it: from its excellence it is called *oleum preciosum*, since half an ounce is well worth a shilling, and with this oil all colours are to be ground and tempered." In the finishing process of the picture a little varnish is added.

Cennino Cennini wrote a treatise on oils in which the oft-quoted technic of the Giotto school is given. The process was to bleach linseed oil in the sun, after which it was mixed with liquid

varnish in the proportion of one ounce of varnish to one pound of oil. The pigments were then ground in this medium. The author adds: "When you would paint a drapery with the three gradations, divide the tints and place them each in its position with your brush of squirrel hair, fusing one colour with another so that the pigments are thickly laid. Then wait certain days, come again and see how the paint covers, and repaint where needful. And in this way paint flesh or anything you please, and likewise mountains, trees, and anything else." Cennino also tells of combining the technics of oil and *a tempera* in the same work. Some authors believe this to have been the famous Van Eyck method.

Alberti in 1450 writes of "a new discovery of laying on colours with oil of linseed so that they resist for ever all injuries from weather and climate." Filarete a little later wrote on the same subject; and the contributions of Vasari along the same line are even more widely known. In discussing the Van Eyck technic, he says that the brothers invented a varnish that "lit up the colours so powerfully that it gave a gloss of itself." We know now, however, that the "invention" long antedated the Van Eyck period. The Van Eycks probably did no more than improve the technic, thereby bringing out some of its latent artistic powers.

Although Hubert Van Eyck is given the credit of having been the first great painter in oils, he

really stands second to Giovanni Bellini, who was first to realize the fuller possibilities of this method in his masterly balancing and contrasting of opaque and transparent colours. It was Bellini who made Titian possible.

Generally, it is the opinion of competent authorities, among whom may be mentioned Maximilian Toch, Ernest Berger, and William Ostwald, that the use of oil-colours in artistic painting was "a gradual development" rather than "a sudden discovery."

The Van Eyck process, so often and erroneously mentioned as marking the introduction of oils, was most likely an oil-tempera. For there are many reasons for suspecting that the Van Eyck brothers, while admittedly using oils, did not confine their work to one method. At all events, precisely what the earliest process was either in Northern or Southern Europe is not known today. But in the beginning of the fifteenth century, Hubert and Jan Van Eyck were painting virtually in oils. And, whatever the cause, the technic of Flemish painting passed through rapid development until it reached its highwater-mark during the opulent period of Flanders.

The Van Eycks painted at Bruges and at Ghent. Their mediæval symbolism, precise and minute work in the scenes which surrounded them, are well known. "In the twenty years," says Fromentin, "the human mind, represented by these two men, had found, in painting, the most ideal

expression of faces, not the noblest, certainly, but the first correct manifestation of bodies in their exact forms, the first picture of the sky, of the air, of clothes, of the country, of external richness, by means of true colours; it had created a living art, invented or perfected its mechanism, determined its language, and produced imperishable works."

Rogier Van der Weyden was not quite so liberal and a little more emotional than the Van Eycks. He founded the school of Brabant which gave him considerable prestige among his contemporaries.

Hans Memling of Bruges, pupil of Van der Weyden, did rare things for his time and school. He was poetic in feeling, and successful in his pictures of women, some of which show remarkable grace of character. Eugène Fromentin, speaking of Saints Catherine and Barbara, says: "Had Memling painted but these two figures . . . we might almost say that he would have done enough to ensure his fame in the first place and, above all, to cause astonishment in those who are preoccupied with certain problems and delight at seeing them solved. Considering only the form, the perfect drawing, the natural gesture without pose, the clearness of the complexions, the satin-like softness of the skin, its smoothness and suppleness; considering the garments in their rich colours, in their very right physiognomic cut, we might well say that it was nature itself, observed by an admirably sensitive and sincere eye."

Some of his landscapes are fine; several of them abound in sleeping greens and express a spirit of serene and holy peace.

Gerard David, also of Bruges, was influenced by Memling but surpassed him in the sense of glowing colour and in a finer perception of line. An understream of colour shines through his best work.

Quentin Matsys, in the latter part of the fifteenth century, was painting portraits, *genre* and religious works, showing a decided advance in expression and modelling. "His style, which marks the close of the early Flemish school and inaugurates a new period, is distinguished by more independence of thought and greater artistic freedom than that of any previous painter in the Low Countries, excepting the Van Eycks"—(Champlin).

The work of Mabuse, and especially that of Bernard Van Orley, reveals signs of Italian influence, which was already beginning to modify slightly Flemish art. Until the advent of Rubens, however, the Italian influence produced little more than mannerisms in Flemish painting.

Nothing now remains to be said of Rubens and his work. The master belongs to the world. It is only for form's sake that he is referred to in passing.

As a colourist, Rubens was a Venetian in his early career; but in time his individuality and virility made him more. He mastered, then seemed to defy, the laws of art in obeying them. He painted human flesh as no one before him had

done and as few since have equalled. He caught the smile of Nature's "myriad nakednesses," and he smote his canvas with a mellow light that melts in many streams. He loved the texture of skin, and he made the flesh beneath it alive with pulsing blood. His movement was passionate, and his style dramatic; it had the rhythm of large grace and of sure confidence. And while his sensuousness has the air of spontaneity guided by chance, it will bear careful checking by the scientific method. He massed his amplitudes of light and shade in seeming abandon, and yet, so far as I can recall, they always balance. His power over luminous colour, his success in portraiture, *genre*, landscape, animal painting, imagination, and feeling, all stand forth in amazing array,—an enduring evidence of the man's superb genius.

Rubens' greatest pupil was Van Dyck, who, as Court painter to Charles I., virtually founded the English school of portraiture. Van Dyck, like his master, had studied in Italy and like him had imbibed the Venetian spirit. As a colourist, he was not so vigorous and virile as Rubens, but more subtle and refined. His shadows, artfully flanked with light, flood the soul with a subdued sense of beauty. His pictures of English aristocracy are justly famous, and they are said to be true to the life of his times.

Jacob Jordaens must be mentioned as a great technician; and he may be commended for his good humour while excused for his coarseness.

Franz Snyders excelled as an animal painter,—Jan Fyt and Jan Weenix in the painting of still-life: mostly dead game. Hondekoeter revelled in fowls and barnyards. All were fine colourists, and as great as they could be in the narrow limits set by each for himself.

In the beginning, there were scarcely any differences between the Flemish and Dutch schools. The Van Eyck brothers dominated both at the start; while Bouts and Van Leyden seem to have made no attempt to break away from the influence of the Flemings.

It was only after the Reformation and the War of Independence at the middle of the seventeenth century, when Spain had lost her hold on the Low Countries and victorious peace had settled over Holland, that her great period of art began. Up to this time her best art had been rather sporadic, and the best examples had emanated from more or less isolated sources.

The conventional religious pictures were not popular in Protestant Holland. Painters no longer felt "the mission of the Cross." The old Dutchmen did not relish the pious fruit with the bitter kernel in it. And as the church seemed to get on well enough with whitewashed walls, the secular world began to demand paintings. The home and the public hall drew to their walls portraits of almost dead perfection with pearls of light peeping out of voiceless gloom; landscapes with skies wrapt in clouds; and large group pic-

tures representing mild civic tumult and incidents in the life of the burghers.

The Dutch imagination was not hungry for idealism, nor were the Dutchmen deeply appreciative of nature; they seemed to have no longing for clamorous vales, clear air and wind and waters flowing. They were satisfied with richness of quality, a subtle play of light and shade, and with a delicacy of texture in the work of their painters. Homely little glimpses of the life they knew appealed to them; they liked the little tavern-scenes, the rectangular compositions, and snatches of life from amongst the humbler classes.

As a result of the requirements of the general taste, the Dutch painters of this period were superb ornamental craftsmen rather than first-rate artist-painters. Of such were Ternberg, Vermeer van Deft, Metzu, Jan Steen, Mieris, Gerard Dow, and others, as for example, Teniers of Flanders, who really belonged to this group of Dutch "small masters." And although they are called "small masters," yet they developed marvellous technic which they enriched with precious gemlike qualities.

Frans Hals was the great emancipator of the spirit of brush-work; he was as bold as a brigand—as brilliant and dashing a painter of portraits as ever lived. He spent no time on sweet saints, avoided symphonies of flame and "poets' seasons when they flower"; but in the most admirable fashion he dealt directly with the world he knew

and understood so well. There was no room within his work for barren lights and wastes of dolorous fancies. He could have painted the very noise of thunder.

Van der Helst followed him as a capable portrait painter,—very conscientious, who was a little tight in his pictures of civic dignitaries and their fleshy wives.

Rembrandt in many respects is regarded as the greatest master of them all. He cared little for linear design and everything for lights and shadows. He had perfect control of golden half-tones and liquid shadows; and he handled surrounding atmosphere as never had been done before. His contrasts may sometimes put a strain on nature; but they never burden the credulity of the beholder who, in his right mind, never doubts anything that the master did. He wooed character with singular fidelity, and he usually won somewhat more than the merest smile of beauty.

CHAPTER XIV

CIS-RHINISH PAINTING

DURING parts of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Rhineland was a great European centre of artistic production. From the middle of the twelfth to the beginning of the fourteenth century, the Gothic movement in France maintained its ascendancy. To the middle of the twelfth century, German art excelled in mediæval wall- and panel-painting of the Romanesque style. Simple in pictorial effect, it was nevertheless excellent in composition and fine as decorative painting. Gradually, the Romanesque lost some of its stiffness and took on some of the telling graces of animation. As early as the first decades of the thirteenth century, German painting showed pleasing effects of the Gothic influence; at the same time it kept its own character while adhering to a high decorative style which, if conventional, was still in keeping with the well-known principles of mural painting. Third dimensional problems were mostly ignored; but the drawing was happy, and sometimes the facial expression was almost Gothic in its limning.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century, the Gothic influence was unmistakable although the technic was largely of outline and flat tints with little or no regard to modelling or perspective. On the whole, however, both colouring and decorative effects were good.

As the Gothic movement spread in the North, the architectural designs reduced the wall space, and, as a consequence, mural painting gave way to stained-glass windows and panel-painting.

The origin of panel-painting is not precisely known. Reference is made to this form of art in the chapter on Greek painting. The painting of panels, we know, flourished in Byzantium in the eleventh century; it later spread over Europe, notably during the revival of painting in the thirteenth century. At various times in its history, the painted panel served as an integral part of architectural design; but it gradually became detached, and finally it was regarded as a separate work of art, thus giving rise to the modern easel-picture.

Some of the earliest known examples of panel painting in Germany are twelfth-century Westphalian. Later, this style of work became general in the North Rhinish countries. The painters' guild of Prague and the school of Cologne developed it still further in the fourteenth century. Wilhelm and Wynrich of Cologne, and especially the Van Eycks, carried this manner of art down virtually to our modern form of easel painting.

Lochner, in the fifteenth century, is said to have originated the "Dombild" which was one of the notorious ancestors of Germany's later brood of deformities in art. For while the early Cologne, and more especially the early Flemish, painters were able to endow their accurate representations of fact with poetic feeling and idyllic charm, the fifteenth-century Germans achieved principally contortion and caricature; they struggled to portray force and succeeded in expressing ugliness. The national insensibility to truth and beauty hung like a pall over German art; and there the gloomy pall has remained ever since, pierced and illuminated now and then by exceptional artists such as Schongauer, who reached out to the Flemish Netherlands for his ideals, and others such as Dürer, Holbein the younger, Grunewald, and Bruyn.

M. Reinach, in summing up German painting of the fifteenth century, says: "Italian art dreamed of beauty and realized its dream. Flemish art was in love with truth, and held the mirror up to Nature. German art rarely achieved either truth or beauty. But it succeeded in rendering, with a fidelity that was often brutal, the character of the German people immediately before and after the Reformation."

Whether the spirit of art is alien to the Teutonic temperament, or whether that temperament requires an art of its own which is not properly appreciated by other peoples, are questions hardly worth

while. This much, however, seems to be evident: In following the art of painting down the ages, one finds that the German phenomenon forms no shining link in the golden chain.

Individual German painters have, from time to time, done fine things; but it seems that their achievements have been despite their Teutonic instincts rather than because of them.

If the German character were less robust in its brutality, and just a trifle more sensitive to its glaring defects, there would be something pathetic and almost splendid in the spiritual isolation of this people from the brotherhood of man.

It is very difficult indeed to sympathize with a doughty outlaw who gloats with satisfaction over the most inhuman of crimes, and who seems to be sincere in the belief that revolting atrocities are righteous, if only they be committed by himself. The most shocking sin loses some of its horror through repentance; and it gains an element which evokes loathing contempt when it adds vulgar swagger to infamy. Even artistic atrocities may be forgiven if the perpetrators do not try to force them on the world. Unfortunately, such seems to be the character of this people,—certainly such must be the interpretation of history.

Soulfulness is not one of the heritages of the Germans; but the gods have been generous with them in other ways. Whereas, so indefinable a thing as spirituality has been denied them, they

have been given more than much that is antithetical. They have been well endowed with a boring or rooting persistency of mind unhampered by finesse or scruple in the cleverest of subterranean plagiarism; they have been blessed with strong stomachs capable of converting sausages and sauerkraut into "frightfulness" as well as into engines of destruction; they have been fortified by an instinct which, if incapable of sublime passion, still succeeds abundantly in bringing forth more litters of the same; and nature has provided them with the armour of calloused areas which are sensitive spots in civilized beings; and nature has also given them a colossal conceit which blinds them to their own monstrous deformities of soul. This overmastering conceit has been tolerably evident in their conduct of war-measures; and it is hardly less evident when they devote themselves to the peaceful arts, if it may be said that as a people they ever did seriously and single-heartedly so devote themselves.

In all this, the gods have been generous to the Germans; and to all this the German national character, as revealed by recent conduct, virtually pleads thus at the Court of Civilization: *Spiritual development is all right for ethereal beings in heaven; but in this world, those who can best raise hell can best clean out the trough. You are welcome to honour's iridescent froth! Give us the thick swill, and after the feed and glut, "a place in the sun"!*

Civilization cannot answer this by argument;

the logic is Teutonic; the ethics is Prussian; it harmonizes with cis-Rhinish ideals; it squares with exigency or "necessity" which is not handicapped by decency; and, according to the gospel of St. Wilhelm, it is sweet and perfect.

And yet whatever may be thought of some of the more offensive and unfortunate characteristics of this people, and however much one may reprobate their callous and cruel conduct, one must after all be just to them; and the civilized portion of mankind can well afford to be generous in recognizing their virtues and accomplishments since they are so recently acquired when measured by the slow epochs of ethnological development.

As to the art of this people, there is not much more to be said. Local schools of painting were flourishing from the Upper to the Lower Rhine as early as the fourteenth century. Yet in all fairness, most of the work of these schools may be dismissed as funny caricatures which were gravely and innocently committed. The German's sense of humour, like his imagination, is not pronounced. The majority of these early painters were utterly lacking in the sentiment and delicacy of their Flemish contemporaries, and also in the beauty and ideality of the South. The schools were all headed away from art and contrary to "the broad approach of fame"; and only a grievous exaggeration, for the most part, rewarded their melancholy efforts.

Albrecht Dürer stands out among his kind as a

glimmering arm might rise above a heap of German carrion, now rotting in the sun along the Marne. And yet this great man of Nuremberg never approximated the pure beauty common to the work of so many of his Italian contemporaries.

At his best, Dürer was an expression of the Germanized Renaissance which, if anything, was intellectual rather than artistic. He embodied in his work a dramatic intensity and a seriousness of purpose which are always commendable, and which he was able to express very simply and directly. His mastery of texture and detail is in accord with the Teutonic temperament at its most efficient level. He could tell a story in the technical language of his craftsmanship with the truthfulness of a child; and in these things he was the greatest German of all times; but as a true artist his fame has never been considerable outside the realm of patriotic appreciation.

Hans Holbein measured up more nearly to the standards erected by art. His genius was like a colourful flower in the midst of sage-green weeds. And this was because his sense of beauty was exceptional to the taste of his people; and because he was exceptional to his countrymen of that time in his capacity for learning composition from the Italians. He succeeded in developing a style of his own which was free from the depression of uniform German ugliness. And the marvel of it all is that despite his native proclivities for depicting minute detail, he showed a broad sympathy and

he manifested a deep insight into character. As Court painter to Henry VIII., whatever German nature he had became modified by some human nature; moreover his work justifies his evident self-confidence in its sound basis of "sureness of touch and expressiveness of line." As an artist he is superior to Dürer, and only second to him as a craftsman. He was always enough the artist to subordinate his wealth of detail to the theme of his picture, and to make his accessories serve as emphasis; and he was philosopher enough to know that usually "truth hath a quiet breast."

CHAPTER XV

PAINTING IN FRANCE

A STRANGE wave spread over Northern Europe about the middle of the twelfth century. We call it Gothic art. It seems to have arisen from the subconscious ideals of a wonderful people; and it was set in motion by their intellectual activity.

Starting from the Île de France, it inundated a large part of Europe with the spirit of new thought and with a sympathetic feeling for naturalistic ideals which gradually crystallized into imperishable works of art.

For nobility of artistic creation, this wavelike movement reached a height that has not been surpassed on earth. It piled great masses of stone into complex and airy architectural monuments of almost perfect design; and it decorated them with splendid traceries which grow more beautiful with time; and it put sumptuous colour in the windows which glow as with the very light of heaven. These massive cathedral piles were enriched with statues of pure dignity; dull, cold stone was made to give forth a grace that previ-

ously had been thought was possible only to the warmth and bloom of life; chiselled rock seemed to thrill with æsthetic ardour as it reflected the spirit of the age—the cosmic soul of the French people.

This movement marked one of the most humane epochs in history: an epoch which interpreted Nature with tenderness as it lovingly learned at her knee the lessons which are beautiful and good. Ornamentation was modelled from growing things so that it suggested their vital and dynamic powers. It was an era ignorant of the old classic spirit; but it discovered in Central France and elsewhere a new, strange spirit which was destined to become classic.

This tidal wave which culminated in certain of the more pronounced expressions of æsthetic taste and power, affected all the arts more or less profoundly, painting among the others. And as the great wave receded leaving landmarks which ever since have been the marvel of man, various other phenomena in the art-life of this people became more apparent. These are associated more particularly with individuals and schools.

With regard to painting, Janet, as François Clouet, the younger, is better known, was one of the world's greatest miniature painters. His work bears some traces of Van Eyck; and in his style there is often a suggestion of Holbein; but there is always enough left of his own individuality to offset any foreign tendency.

The foremost representative of French paint-

ing in the fifteenth century was perhaps Jehan Foucquet, the illuminator. He not only stood at the head of the Italo-Flemish school of miniature painting, but he was successful in larger works. Jean Cousin, a contemporary of Janet, was a noted painter of glass, a miniaturist, an engraver, and a sculptor. His talents seem to have been purely French, and to have escaped foreign influences.

The Fontainebleau school was probably a dead-weight to the development of French painting,—surely, it never acted as an accelerator. This school, so called, was indirectly founded by Francis I., who in 1531 imported some second-rate painters from Italy to decorate his castle at Fontainebleau. This stimulated a clique of local painters to affect pseudo-Italian mannerisms, which however were ineffective, and their work was ephemeral.

Early in the seventeenth century, a few native artists showed some feeble originality of conception; but for the most part they were influenced by the technic of their Dutch contemporaries and by the sombre colours of the Spanish. The Le Nain brothers are conspicuous in this group.

Nicolas Poussin had studied in Rome, and returned to head the Classicists' movement in France. The Eternal City was regarded at that time as the source of all art. Poussin had learned much from Michael Angelo and Raphael, and even more from the antique. He became more classic than the Classicists themselves. He thought

and painted in the language of ancient statues. His style was epic; and his figures, as a result of his intemperance for the antique, were little more than coloured translations of the old reliefs. His faulty vision of life, movement, and emotion interfered with his artistic expression of these things. He subordinated nature to his notions of art, and thus he neglected colour and atmosphere in his landscapes while striving, often successfully, for nobility of arrangement, dignity, and power of linear perspective. His soul lingered in ages past, and his brushes were rather too much engaged with ancient fables and with the personification of lakes and rivers. At first, his works were dry and simple; but later in his career he changed to a more fluid manner which produced richer effects. Gaspard Poussin, his adopted son, was a little less severe of line and he had a truer conception of light and air in his landscapes.

"Beholding the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still of delightful studies," Claude Lorrain has been called the discoverer of sunlight. His power over the problems of light and air was remarkable. He did not however regard unadorned nature as a worthy subject of the painter, and therefore relied strongly on architectural features. His natural bent was toward "Arcadian scenes and fairy lands." Still, he rescued the treatment of clouds, trees, and rivers from the conventionalities of art; and he had a fine appreciation of the varying effects of light on different

objects and at different hours of the day. He is justly famous, not alone on his own account, but because he was the spiritual progenitor, across two centuries, of the wonderful Turner.

Burnet and Murray, in discussing Claude's technic, say: "His glazings are more painted into with greys and green tones of a tender hue, which render his masses of shadow less harsh, and give a greater appearance of magnitude." This is one of the best methods with which to dispel all garishness from colour. But Lorrain was also master of the scumble and knew where to retouch without disturbing his broad effects. This is noticeable in his clouds which carry so well the strong shadows.

Charles Lebrun, pupil of Poussin, became Court painter to Louis XIV., and therefore the autocrat of the art of his day. Painting was in rapid decline, with only a few men, such as Mignard and Rigaud, painting fairly good portraits.

Antoine Watteau had a tenderness for colour and a taste for festal hours which he filled with a drowsy cadence drunk with flowers. He was at the head of painting in France during the "Rococo" period. His *Fêtes galantes* are celebrated for sensuousness and a precious quality of colour and for a convincing spirit of naturalness. He managed light and atmosphere rather sweetly; and he arranged his scenes with no uncertain taste, but always with an air of refinement. His work is largely lyric and quite free from classic influence.

Lancret and Pater followed in the art's down-

ward dip which, although lissom and laughterful, was too often drunk with the voluptuous *morbidesse* of Louis XV.'s Court. The life of the Court at this time found its fullest expression in the work of François Boucher. It was the period *par excellence* when they knew how to paint "the world, the flesh, and the devil," to quote from the Litany.

Although this was a period of degeneracy in painting, the art was still capable of great decorative charm and of no mean beauty. Boucher is chiefly remembered as the "Painter of the Graces," and as the master of Fragonard.

Fragonard was a painter of fine qualities who was very successful in nudes. He was the connecting link between a period of lascivious, seductive degeneracy and that of the ugly tumult of the Revolution.

Chardin and Greuze for the most part reflected a wholesomer life of the people. Following the Revolution, and the fall of Court power, the art of France flowed in new channels. The artists began to recognize not only the rules of their art, but the imperative necessity of obedience to them.

CHAPTER XVI

PAINTING IN SPAIN

IN Spain, painting was conceived under difficulties and imprisoned at birth. Conditions in that country have never been favourable to its growth. Lying is the sole art that could thrive under the iron rule of the Church during the Spanish Inquisition. Painting was not only enslaved by the Church, but it was handicapped by the very character of the people, whose stupid pride, unhuman dignity, idiotic reserve, and sombre attitude toward life were reflected in art as in a mirror. The Flemish masters of the fifteenth century had no lively influence on it; and Italy failed to sweeten it in the sixteenth century.

Borgoña and Berreguete, toward the end of the fifteenth century, were among the first to introduce the Italian technic. Under Charles V. and Philip II., the Italian method took firmer hold, but the spirit and the colour remained local; that is to say, sombre and heavy. Morales, Campaña, and Vargas made ineffectual attempts at freedom; but they only succeeded in gaining a certain dramatic intensity, strength, and boldness.

They were never widely known outside their own country.

Toward the end of the sixteenth century a school arose at Seville. Pacheco, the teacher of Velasquez, painted here more or less indifferently. Juan de las Roélas and the elder Herrera were strong enough to introduce some of the fine colouring of the Venetians into the sad shadows called Spanish painting. Zurbaran added emotion, dramatic intensity, and other pleasing qualities of form and line. El Greco lost both emotional and mental balance in seeking artistic freedom. He painted nightmares very well indeed, and shapes that are deaf to an earthly call. There was a worm "in the bud of his youth, and at the root of his age."

Velasquez was a phenomenon. Like all other supreme geniuses, he belonged to no country and to no age, but equally to all. He endowed art with new vision and new skill. With the fewest of colours he gave broken-tone values of the widest range. He incorporated the essentials without unduly slighting the subordinate features of his work, which was borne on "the full tide of successful experiment." As a rational impressionist, he carried his effects to the exact limits of his art. He caught the soul in its real body; and he was never blinded by the miserable mannerisms of affectation. He was the master of harmony and of technic; and so clever was he that he made his hardest work when done seem as spontaneous as

a dream. It is said that he painted as one labouring at a loom. True art produces laboriously, but it suggests no effort in the finished piece. It sweeps away all sense of duty and converts obligation into pleasure. This master was superb not only in colour but also in composition and general space arrangements. There was nothing about him of low ambition or the thirst of praise. He was a man as well as a painter.

Murillo is always associated with Velasquez, by the principle of contrast, perhaps. He was a good colourist, in a way, a good Catholic, a good draughtsman. But Murillo's limitations were very narrow, his inspiration colourless and insipid, and his ideas only varnish-deep. He added nothing to his art. Compared with Velasquez he is mediocre, with most other Spanish painters, he is great,—which illustrates again the truth of Du Bartas: "And swans seem whiter if swart crowes be by."

Ribera was schooled by the Italian naturalists, but without much profit. He could never rid himself of his ecstatic passion nor of the sombre shadows of his native country. His subjects generally are hostile to the principles and ideals of art.

Goya, great as he was as a painter, was even greater as a satirist whose fearless work was a power for the general good. After the death of Velasquez and Murillo, Spanish art was on the toboggan slide,—and it seems to be going yet.

About the only relief it has had was through the versatile genius of Goya, but even he could not sustain it long. At his best, he was a close second to Velasquez; indeed, through him Velasquez is linked to Manet and his times.

CHAPTER XVII

LANDSCAPE PAINTING

LANDSCAPE painting is virtually a modern art. Although its perfect flowering belongs to our own epoch, its growth may be traced back to very early times. Apart from the records left by ancient authorities on art, there are now extant a number of worthy examples of landscape from the walls of Pompeii and Rome. Some of them are remarkable for their atmospheric effects and suggestions of space, and as well for their happy handling of light and shade. As in late mediæval landscapes, the figures are well forward and subordinate. During the Augustan Age there were masters of the art. The garden pictures of Ludius, for instance, in the Livia villa are justly renowned. Pliny has made the name of this painter familiar to us by praising his work.

Beginning on this side the mists: crude conceptions of landscape took form with Giotto and slowly developed down the centuries, scattering the "living flowers that skirt the eternal frost," as Coleridge says. With possibly rare exceptions, none of the "Primitives" painted landscapes

purely for their own beauty and potential poetry. In their pictures the landscape was a subordination, usually; often an abomination. The Giottesques, Perugino, Raphael, the Van Eycks, Memling, and others used the landscape as a pleasing accessory, to accentuate sentiment, or for other reasons. Patinir, Giorgione, and especially Titian in one of his scenes from his beloved Cadore, very nearly approximated the art as we think of it today.

Thus landscape remained an incidental art to all purposes until the seventeenth century. Poussin and Lorrain made it somewhat more. They were the real fathers of the landscape, although Rubens demonstrated clearly that he possessed the same mastery of landscape as over other fields; for he painted not after the manner of men, but of angels, as it were.

As we have seen, Poussin was a good observer of nature but his work was emotionless and his designs were formal. Lorrain was not only an intelligent observer, but a great master of light and air who was able to see the flowery foam of grass where the wind walks and leaves tracks of sheen. Both, however, lacked that feeling for "nature unadorned" which is so obvious in all first-rate landscapists. Just as the American, L. P. Dessar, often uses nature as a convenient peg on which to hang his sumptuous colour, so Nicolas Poussin used nature as a means, and approached her only in a conventional and unsym-

pathetic spirit. In a similar manner, but in a more progressive spirit, Lorrain made use of architecturally embellished nature as a foil for his sunlight and atmosphere.

The seventeenth-century Dutchmen approached nature differently; that is to say, more lovingly and with greater understanding. Ruysdael, ever in quest of the picturesque, turned his heart toward wilder scenes than perhaps his eyes ever beheld; for he loved the steep hills, the wild rocks, and strange places. Hobbema wooed the spirit of his own land with a quiet, homely simplicity, but with great sympathy. He was a fascinating colourist, poetic in feeling, with his villages set in among trees "with a light road running through them, or a piece of stagnant water, fenced in with reeds or railings, carrying down to the base of his picture the reflections of sky and tree." Rembrandt, with passionate intensity, threw his whole great soul into his landscapes.

The Dutch masters, particularly those of the early part of the seventeenth century, were democratic enough in artistic vision to find beauty of subject almost ubiquitous; and they saw adequately enough to render tone and atmosphere with great fidelity and with equal facility; and although they worked with freedom, they never failed to suggest accuracy and truth; their sense of texture was extremely delicate; and on the whole their influence was felt down through Hogarth, Chardin, Morland, Constable, and

even by the Barbizon painters of the nineteenth century.

And yet these men could never quite free themselves from the conventional browns which long custom had thrown into foliage and shadow. The colours of nature seemed to elude their best efforts. Most of the Dutchmen were masters of the cloudy skies of the North Sea shore. Hobbema in addition was especially skilful in his subtle variations of foliage, with its opaque grey tints, cool outer edges, and warm inner masses; while Cuyp and Paul Potter were not only remarkable painters of cattle, but they were so clever that they gave to their animals a home and a habitation in their surroundings,—made them integral and therefore plausible parts of the landscape.

An interesting technical detail, which it may be well to notice in passing, was observed by Burnet and Murray (*Landscape Painting in Oil Colours*):

> Cuyp seems to have used a great deal of varnish with his oil, hence the crisp sharp edge of his clouds, which, though bathed in the light of the setting sun, still possess form and distinctness; and though finished with the greatest tenderness, the softener never seems to have been in his hand. This sweetness is produced by repeated scumbling, which is going over the whole, when the several paintings are dry, with lighter tints mixed with white, whereas what is termed glazing is the use of transparent colours without white; and this it is that gives his skies that luminous, unsteady appearance, as if every particle of atmosphere was filled

with the rays of the setting sun; even his darkest clouds seem to have been subjected to this treatment; hence their aerial property.

The Dutch marine artists were nautical in feeling—painters of seafaring life—rather than elemental lovers of the sea. Van de Capelle, Simon de Vlieger, and Van de Velde, for example, rendered with excellent feeling fleets of sailing craft of all kinds as they played their part in the life of the sea,—ships that veer in the tide and tack with the wind. On the other hand, Vernet, the Frenchman, although bound by many classicist traditions, yet was lured by elemental storms of sea and air while unable to render them with cataracts of passion. The splendid furies of nature were not yet understood in relation to art. Watteau, as a landscapist, was a beautiful anomaly. Although his landscapes are subjective and fanciful, they are nevertheless so objective by suggestion that they seem real. Yet many of them are as delicate as traceries made of air against the moon's pale shield.

Turning now to England, in the early part of the eighteenth century, landscape art flowed in two directions: one stream toward exactness, with colours as dry as old miseries, as exemplified by the work of Samuel Scott; the other toward a modified classicism, as shown by the work of Richard Wilson; and Wilson was so good an imitator of Lorrain that he almost

rivalled him with soft colours wherein the soul abides.

Thomas Gainsborough marked an advanced step, and his genius is a connecting link between the old and the new style exemplified by Constable. In colouring, Gainsborough was still conventional, although he added pleasing qualities to his general scheme of grey, brown, and gold; but his compositional arrangements were free from the older set rules, liberating harmonies which tell of winds and waters and the ineffable smile of twilights cool. He discovered in the English countryside a charm of poetic peace that needed no classic embellishment; and he was not given to botanizing. He was moving toward but never reached the ideals of Constable.

Old Crome, as he is called, was at the head of the Norwich school, composed of such men as Ladbroke, Stark, Vincent, and Cotman. There is a marked relationship between this group and the Dutch landscapists—so much so that Crome has been called the English Ruysdael. One of the distinguishing features of this band lies in the fact that although they followed the colouring of the old masters, they pursued the modern method of seeking inspiration and subjects directly from nature's marshalled gloom and living light.

"When all of genius that can perish dies," the memory of John Constable will still live. He was the inspiration and the prototype of the 1830 movement in France; indeed, he was the great

leavening spirit of landscape art. He caught spring's earliest lights, the sallow glow of summer, and autumn's red beneath wild winds. It was he who interpreted with profound sympathy and understanding the meaning of field and wood and the changing moods of weather. He saw the dank greens in grassy places, the movement of sparkling leaves under wooing breezes, the storm-lashed boughs; he heard Nature's groanings under stress, and her caressing laughter at lighter moments; and he translated these into the terms of his art.

That wonderful group of French painters, known as the Barbizon school, saw in Constable's interpretation and love of nature a worthy example to be followed. About 1830 they rebelled against the prevailing tendency of painting and sought to express the poetry of nature regardless of such fetish subjects as *classic*, *heroic*, and *romantic*. They strove for emotional expression and they found great beauty in the simpler truths. They put twinkling lights amidst the rocks, flower-wise, and let autumn's colours drip from the trees like rain. Theodore Rousseau was at the head of this school, which was composed of Troyon, Dupré, Jacque, Daubigny, Diaz, Corot, Millet, and others.

Rousseau was a kind of impersonal demiurge, engaged with form and structure. Diaz was inclined to be romantic. Troyon and Jacque were master cattleists. Millet caught the sad spirit of the labouring fields which he personified in his

peasant figures, tempting one to exclaim with Goldsmith: "By the living jingo, they are all a muck of sweat!" Millet was the strongest of the neo-synthesists. While the poet-painter, Corot, —a real stoic of the woods,—hailed lovingly the misty advent of morn; he peopled the reluctant twilight, as no one else has done, with music and fragrant dreams, while through the sparkling leaves there seem to rise the voices of amorous flowers.

Turner, in his turn, was the spiritual link between Lorrain and the French impressionists. Transcending the technical and imaginative powers of his artistic progenitor in light and colour, he still clung, especially in his early career, to heroic traditions; and yet in his later work of softened outlines and more vibrant atmosphere he avoided the realism of Monet, and remained always the splendid idealist, a trifle visionary possibly, but ever glorious in his imagination. His later work was influenced by his visit to Italy. Forms grew less real and more suggestive under an atmosphere more vibrant with colour and light. Among his kind, he ranks as the noblest sun-worshipper of them all. But the really great man, of course, reminds us of no one else.

The French impressionists proceeded to attack by a scientific method the problems which Turner had mastered by the force of his genius. Through a study of the laws of optics and colours as revealed by Helmholtz and Chevreul, and of the spectral

analysis, these men shaped their technic; and by the employment of the "primary" colours juxtaposed on their canvases sought to blend their vibrations in the beholding eye, and thus to increase the illusion of luminosity, the purity and powers of their pigments. In the technic of the best men, such as Monet and Manet and some others, they succeeded admirably, and even produced looming bastions fringed with fire.

The first as well as one of the greatest impressionists was Hals. Few men have ever surpassed him in the suggestive manipulation of pigments. Velasquez must also be rated as one of the great impressionists. In some of his work the truest of form and the finest of local colour are made to vibrate in loosely combined touches. His technic neither sacrificed depth nor slighted solidity, for his fidelity to nature was constant. This is "impressionism" in its highest form. It can be achieved only through the mastery of light as it plays about objects in dancing tones and changing hues always veiling and revealing in turn the definite edge, and yet ever perfectly suggesting truth to the eye. Scale has nothing to do with this, but the mastery of light and the understanding of shade, with all their delicate and almost infinite gradations, have all to do with it. Many of these gradations are as elusive as the most subtle tints of the opal.

It appears therefore that impressionism was practised by artists in the seventeenth century;

and consequently it is two hundred years older than it is usually considered to be. It was born long before it was named, and it had grown up before it was explained.

Everything that affects human consciousness does so through point-of-view, or the way of looking at things. Pleasure may be transmuted into positive pain by an idea or an emotion. Liberties taken with the dignity or otherwise in the personal domain of a sensitive being may readily become the cruelest of torture or the blissful acme of happiness inexpressible. The martyr broken on the wheel may be ecstatic, while a sliver in the thumb of a Sybarite may cause engrossing pain. This is the working of a law everywhere evident in the spiritual world; and if the human being is anything besides a brute, he is spiritual—that is to say spiritually conscious.

We find this law pervading everything that touches the consciousness of man. In the sense of duration, for instance, it upsets all our measurements of time, or establishes a super-standard of measurement which takes no cognizance of time as it is mechanically divided or mathematically stated. As old and as varied as folk-lore are the expressions: "time flies" (when we are happy) and "time drags" (when we are miserable). Self-consciousness determines by its sense of well-being or of ill-being the velocity of duration.

In art the same thing happens. We see according to our consciousness. If we are conscious of

our surroundings as separate and successive objects, we see them one by one as we visualize each in turn. If we are conscious of our environment as a whole unified by relationship, our field of vision is encompassed by a glance, that is to say, it is envisaged *en masse*. If we are more conscious of one object than of others in the field of vision, that object becomes the point of focus, leaving all other objects less and less distinct as they fall away from the focus, according to the principles of optics. If consciousness be dulled or if it be stupid, our visualization is ox-eyed—we see everything and nothing. If consciousness be over-exhilarated and ecstatic or hysteric, as it were, we visualize as in a dream and we interpret in the terms of phantasmagoria.

In the art of painting, the manner of seeing is all-important. Perhaps one manner is as legitimate as any other; but by whichever manner one sees, by that manner should one paint. The purpose of the painter should be to represent what he sees as he sees it.

It would seem that the conscious soul is still enough of a stranger to its environment to make it advisable to view surrounding objects with the purpose of becoming better acquainted with them. This is the most common manner of looking at nature; and in obedience to the analytical requirements of this manner, we examine different objects more or less successively and in detail. Likewise in painting, we find this to be the most

usual method of procedure. Next comes the treatment of objects in the field of vision with the group-effect; and next, the treatment of one central object around which all others cluster in gradation growing more and more indistinct. These are the three usual methods of seeing things and of painting them. There remains one other method to consider which has rarely been successful. It is followed by artists, such as Blake and El Greco, who visualize as in a dream and who paint in the terms of phantasmagoria. The field of this method is not inviting; and the painters who have cultivated it have not produced very good crops.

It will be seen by the foregoing that impressionism has as fine a basis for its being and as respectable a place in the evolution of the art of painting as any other style has or could have. It is the logical and therefore the inevitable method of rendering that which one sees as one sees it normally. The next step of advance perhaps in method is marked by the Tonalists.

CHAPTER XVIII

TONALISM AND TONALISTS[1]

A SOUND method is the basis of sane workmanship; this is one of the secrets of the Tonalist's success. There are many others which may be read, by any one who chances to be familiar with the language of painting. One of these secrets is honest industry; another is logical effort which is naturally followed by congruity of effect. The resulting pictures are as noteworthy for their consistency as for their beauty—terms which in a sense are interchangeable.

A regard for unity and sanity of arrangement is, of course, not inherent in any method; but it finds expression rather through what has been aptly called the personal equation. The same personal equation that expresses itself sanely is very likely to make use of the most efficient means. This is the principal reason, I believe, why the true Tonalist is not easily diverted by quirks of technic. His fidelity to common-sense will not be shaken by passing fads. One may look in vain over his representative canvases for signs of

[1] *Art-Talks with Ranger.*

emotional conflict or lack of judicial poise; in a word, for jumbled elements. The tranquil and the impetuous, the sober and the gay, are all there, and each will be found in its own place.

The skilful artist—the first-rate craftsman—leaves none of his effects to the caprice of chance. He can drive the technical and the theoretical steeds of his car side by side, as it were, or in tandem, without entangling them in the traces of his art. Many a man, not without cleverness, has been undone in attempting this feat. The cause of disaster can usually be traced to lack of taste or a faulty knowledge of the principles involved.

The painter's keen eye for beauty should not have an exaggerated "blind spot" for the personal imperfections which mar the development of an impersonal art. Whether the essential characteristics of a painter are a birth-gift, or whether, as Reynolds says, "Excellence is never granted to man, but as the reward of labour," is of no importance so long as his work reveals the qualities required by art.

All those who are familiar with the finest examples of the Tonal school must be impressed with their sensuous swing and play of broken colours, which are wedded to such delightful designs and pleasing patterns that they neither seem like designs nor yet suggest patterns. So agreeably are all the parts connected that they are seen only together: fused in a nice relation to the

whole. Thus is the appearance of labour dispelled from the picture, not by the clumsy means of obscuration, but by the deft methods of harmony, so cunningly wrought that the production is as free from the moans of labour, as the gently swaying boughs of a tree or the happy waters of a lazy brook. Only through such freedom from petty artifice,—such dignity of poise and healthy temperament,—may nature's lyric beauty be caught and imprisoned in thin layers of colour.

The pictures which have survived the ceaseless "revolutions" in art, and have held their own under the merciless scrutiny and severe appraisals of time, are, almost to a canvas, those which in varying degree meet the requirements of the Tonal method of painting. These noble specimens disclose a mastery of the relations which assemble and unify all the components of a picture into a single broad harmony. Thus the masters, working independently from nature, were able to produce pictures which bear none of the marks of uncertainty so common to the work of men of less keen observation and of less sound knowledge.

It is reasonable to infer that the judgment of the masters, ancient and modern, had the solid foundation of a clear analytical mentality, and that it was supported by long and patient industry. It is evident from their work, that these men so trained the visual memory that it could be trusted to give rein to the imagination, without fear of a runaway or the danger of collision with fact. For

the powers of perception must be disciplined to the point where enthusiasm can play no pranks with the realism of things worth while in art. Briefly, all the strong Tonalists of whom we have knowledge were so efficient in what Sir Joshua says "is properly called the Language of Art," that the subtleties of æsthetic expression and the finer shades of sensuous meaning were effective tools in their grasp. Learning first the use of these, they found no difficulty in liberating the poetic energy which has recorded itself on their remarkable canvases.

The Tonalist understands the basic principles of his art,—principles of which the often popular and always ephemeral faddists are childishly ignorant. He seems to know that the coloured body-light of a painting slightly broken by the colourless surface-light produces an effect which is more pleasing to the eye than either body-light or surface-light broken merely by its own diversity or varying intensity. This effect he achieves by *texture* to which there is no short cut; but when once mastered, it handsomely rewards the workman for the labour patiently spent in its cause. It endows his canvas lavishly with all sorts of riches: in one place there dreams the suggestion of a velvet emerald, in another that of a pigeon-blood ruby, and somewhere between the two nestles the mellowed translucency of mutton-fat jade; in seeming abandon, the souls of happy jewels are scattered with such consummate skill that it

is hard sometimes to believe that they are made of paint.

The Tonalist must be clever enough to learn early in his career that a scientific process is necessary to the best and most durable effects in art. The process, it is true, may be acquired by accident or through study; and the method may combine empiricism with feeling, or the mechanical application in the work may be wholly unconscious of the scientific principles involved; and, if the laws be not broken, their judgment will be as benign as a cloudless summer sky.

The most satisfactory results in painting, however, are those most uniformly reliable, because capable of being foreseen; and they depend upon the scientific accuracy of knowledge governing the divers stages of the work. Many artists affect to believe, and others, sincere in their ignorance, contend that scientific knowledge interferes with the artistic spontaneity shown in the result. In the light of the few things we know, if we know anything, the belief is unfounded in fact, as has been proved repeatedly in the experiences of well-known painters; and the contention falls to the ground for the lack of reasonable support. Surely, the art of painting involves such a narrow range and application of scientific principles that a working knowledge of them is not likely to interfere either with feeling or "inspiration." A scientific technic ought to be more easily acquired than one evolved from blind groping and, as it can be

converted as quickly as any other into "second nature," there can be no valid objection to it.

It is readily demonstrable that the Tonalist's method of using glazes accounts for much of the colour charm of the tone-picture. For example, when he overlays an opaque colour with a thin stratum, semi-transparent and suitably tinted, he makes use of one of the rich properties of stained glass. The light from without must pass twice through the tinted plate, and as it issues, by reflection, a discordant part of the white light is neutralized. That is to say, the glaze destroys a part of the white light by converting some rays into heat, while those rays which remain unconverted into heat emerge as coloured, and are truly sanctified in their purity, adding a tone of beauty impossible to any other known process.

In this method two colours must be married, and considered together. The phenomenon in its practical relations must be apprehended, since a part of one colour is changed into heat, and therefore lost as a colour-value, while the part which is conserved in its purity becomes intensified in effect. Certain problems of contrast aside, the two colours usually studied in their mutual relations in this respect are called *complementary*. Thus if green is destroyed, the red remains purer, and vice versa.[1] The same phenomenon is observed with such couples as blue and golden yellow, green-yellow and violet, red and blue-green, scarlet

[1] *Letters to a Painter*, Ostwald.

red and greenish cyan, sap green and purple magenta, orange red and bluish cyan, and so forth with a great number of others. Hence, since any part of the total, resulting in white light, may be removed and its complementary colour left, a means lies within reach of any painter whereby he can purify, intensify, and give tone to his colours that no other method permits. Thus, there is possible with this technic, the illusion of depth and luminosity which is relatively impossible with others.

Of course, there is no hard and sharp line separating the sheep from the goats. There are strong men whose work, if not strictly Tonal, still contains some Tonal qualities—just as there are Tonalists who stray beyond the technical limits of the purely scientific principles of their method. It may be observed, however, that he who violates the laws of his art does so at an inevitable loss to the excellence of his work. This retribution, unlike the judgments administered by man, is meted out in the exact degree of his transgression, and is, therefore, always just.

There are many painters who decry academic methods and instruction; but when their objections are sifted, it appears that the academy teaches nothing and has nothing to teach that can possibly harm any student with individuality and the mentality which is capable of appropriating nurture. Temperament, intuition, and feeling are useful and very practical mental assets in art;

but scientific knowledge, I repeat, is indispensable to the highest achievements in the possibilities of art. As a rule, academic training only hurts those who have been incurably hurt previously in the inscrutable machinations of Fate,—that is to say those who lack some of the essentials of a true artist.

Better than the votaries of any other school known to me, the Tonalist catches the laughter of shimmering light, and transmutes it into pictorial joy; he speaks admirably the old mother-tongue of cloud, tree, pool, and stone; he interprets the spring; he is summer's scribe, page to the majesty of autumn, and priest to the whole round year. With a simple palette, and as if by magic, he expresses breadth, teasing transparency, mysterious distances, the illusion of luminosity—in a word, the drama of air, light, and colour. Taken all in all, his pictures challenge, please, and convince. As a last refinement, he permeates them with his own individuality, and thus may he be called a creator.

The Tonal landscapist of today does not belong to the class of modern painters who have to sit down and wait for inspiration to come tapping at the door; he is always inspired with that sure attribute of genius which is a combination of industry, imagination, and judgment. And through all his works are woven the elements of a sane courage, a subdued splendour, and a veiled glory which vibrate with the sincerity and freedom of air and light.

Some of his pictures are lyric raptures which arise wholly from present joy in the contemplation of natural beauty. His dramatic landscapes arouse an emotional intensity fed by the tragic associations of human experience; and there are others which thrill, as it were, with the epic faith of man in his own splendid destiny. In the aspect of some may be found heroism, toil, and suffering; again there appears a grim triumph amounting almost to savage joy; and in still others there is something which arouses the supreme rapture as it corresponds to life's aspirations just before their inevitable, periodic recoil—which in art is one phase of rhythm.

Naturally, there is no rigid division between these different aspects of the Tonalist's art as revealed in the diverse emotions aroused by his pictures. The unity is so perfect that one glides into another as insensibly as morning into noon, and finds itself, or differentiates itself from the others, only through emphasis, or rather, let me say, in the æsthetic personality of the beholder. For not unlike Shakespeare, this modern technical and spiritual brother of the old masters gives unto each according as each one hath soul with which to receive.

CHAPTER XIX

MODERN PAINTING

ENGLISH painting was dominated by foreign influences until the time of Hogarth. There was no dearth of native talent but rather a preponderance of foreign. Holbein was first in point of time and mastery. As Court painter, he set the pace and style which influenced his contemporaries and successors for a generation of portraiture, especially in miniature.

Van Dyck, as Court painter to Charles I., put his stamp upon the art down through the eighteenth century. His influence may be said to have been dominant, although it was slightly modified by that of Lely and of Kneller. Other succeeding men had their followers, such as Moro, Mierevelt, Rigaud, Largillière, and Canaletto; but their work made no lasting impression. Even such capable painters as Dobson, Walker, and Scott added nothing notable to the art of painting, which was tongue-tied by stately aristocracy.

Then came Hogarth, the first British painter to interpose any original ideas; or, at least, the first who was strong enough to impress them on

painting. The most striking quality of his work was its democratic strength; the next was a puritanical power of satire; and next, an element which may be called moral sermonizing. And while he chose his subjects outside the realm of art, he handled them with great artistic cleverness and effect. That he had powers beyond those of story-telling and of preaching is evident in the brush-work, colour, and composition of some of his pictures, wherein there is shown a pure joy of beauty. In the words of Burnet:

> The works of Hogarth have created a class of Painting new to Art, and raised the inferior walks of the English School, by teaching the capability of their being ennobled by the infusion of moral and poetical embellishments. Notwithstanding his works are faulty in many necessary adjuncts of painting, his forms harsh and angular, his draperies fluttering and ungraceful, his perspective unpleasant in choice; yet, with all these defects, an Englishman points to Hogarth as a proof of the genius of his country.

That statement, we must remember, was made some time ago.

During the second half of the eighteenth century, a great English school of portraiture arose with Gainsborough at its head. Reynolds and Raeburn were the two other most distinguished members of this group. Gainsborough upheld the aristocratic traditions with his portrayal of elegance, refinement, and of overdressed individuals of society.

His technic was masterful, and his colour-schemes pleasing. His artistic kinship with Van Dyck is obvious; it is shown particularly in the *Blue Boy*, which he painted, by the way, to demonstrate the possibility of making blue "the dominating colour of a successful scheme." This, Reynolds had said could not be done.

Reynolds, on the other hand, advocated the democratic traditions also with success. In his way, he had made a close study of the old masters; and his knowledge of the art of the past enabled him to arrange his designs, style, and colour according to well established canons. He was almost too much of a stickler for the "Grand Style"; and he went often enough to such masters as Tintoretto, Titian, Correggio, and Michael Angelo for inspiration. Unknown to himself, his great forte was not so much the painting of "histories" in noble design and colour as of portraits; an occupation which he regarded as the merest drudgery. When Goldsmith wrote of

> A flattering painter, who made it his care
> To draw men as they ought to be, not as they are,

he may have referred to his friend Reynolds. Just the same, Reynolds knew that the likeness of a portrait consists more in the general air than in an exact representation of every feature. And there is every reason to believe that his portraits were superb.

Although he was ambitious to shine as a great student, and succeeded in becoming a wise commentator, he seemed to lack the scientific method in his experimental work. Nevertheless, he was an intellectual man and a painter blessed with many excellent qualities. In the lines of Emerson:

> Born for success he seemed,
> With grace to win, with heart to hold,
> With shining gifts that took all eyes.

As a painter of portraits no one will now deny his mastery; but many believe that his want of scientific knowledge, together with his proneness to experimentation, have been damaging to the durability of his work. But there is another side to the question.

In *Art-Talks with Ranger*, a vigorous protest is made against the ignorant methods of the ruthless restorers of paintings. John Burnet, early in the nineteenth century, utters a similar protest; he says:

> A numerous class of men have risen up in this country [England], and indeed in all countries where the pictures by old masters are in demand, who, though unable either to draw or to paint, assume a knowledge superior to the artists whose province it is to produce tints, and tones of colour of a corresponding quality. It is in vain to tell these men that "deep-toned brightness is produced only by repeated glazings, and that these glazings are composed of little more than varnish and transparent colour." Many deny that such

a thing as glazing existed, and consequently in removing what they consider "dirt and varnish," they remove every particle of richness of tint. What spirits will not reach, they follow into every crevice with the point of a lancet, until the picture becomes not fresh and bright as it is termed, but raw and crude in the highest degree; . . . no works have suffered more in this respect than his own [Sir Joshua's], many of which are cleaned down to the preparation for glazing, and when pointed out as examples of this destructive course, it is impudently asserted that his colours have fled.

In technic and colour, Reynolds is quite opposite to Gainsborough, whose touches were thin and whose colours were cool and musical. Reynolds' scheme inclines to be hot and his sumptuous colours are laid on thickly.

George Romney has been rated with Gainsborough and Reynolds, whom he equalled solely in technical skill but whom he hardly approached in sense of beauty. As an artist-painter, however, he fell far below them in "the power of thought, the magic of the mind"; for painting is one of the literatures of thought.

Raeburn, long neglected, is now recognized as the greatest Scottish master. Some of his paintings haunt the memory as eagles the air. He was a good colourist, virile in his brush-work, broad and strong. Coates, Opie, and Hoppner were also painters of considerable power and of many excellent qualities. Sir Thomas Lawrence was the

connecting link between this brilliant period of English painting and the later academic slump into monotony and sloth which, as Jerrold says, would almost vulgarize the day of judgment itself.

Landscape painting made marvellous strides during the bright period. Constable, whose pictures were as fragrant as the South, was, as I have said, the prototype of the Barbizon masters, as Turner was of the French impressionists. The general taste in art, however, was at a low ebb. Landseer, despite all criticism, rose to some eminence as an animal painter. And David Wilkie was a decided master of pigments, although the effect of his work was marred by small precisions and distracting details. Sir David began by imitating the qualities of Teniers; and his aspirations never carried him much higher than the level of the Dutch "small masters." Although he referred all things to nature, and achieved much skill in the manner of Ostade's glazings, his efforts never attained the colours and qualities of Rembrandt, whom he imitated late in his career. He did, however, acquire some admirable qualities, such as the successful massing of light and shade and the handling of composition.

William Blake was a kind of El Greco in English environment—another isolated anomaly in art—a lone mystic who painted more by faith than by sight. Still, in art every man must bear his own burden; and that man is lost, according to Ephe-

sians, who is "carried about with every wind of doctrine." Blake had lucid intervals.

In 1848, English painting had reached its low-water mark. Then arose the famous Brotherhood of Pre-Raphaelites who went back to the methods of the Italian Primitives. The leading spirits of the Brotherhood were Rossetti, Millais, and Holman Hunt; and their great champion was Ruskin. These men cast the academic formulæ to the winds and approached Nature honestly but too precisely for art. Some of their work is as radiant as the rivers of the skies. In their passion for microscopic truth, however, they often lost the macroscopic spirit. These men seemed to forget that Nature is broad and that Art must so represent her. But they did substitute for the usual trivial subjects of their time the larger subjects of romance and poetry. This was commendable. The Brotherhood was a storm-breeder, and of short life; although its influence has persisted in the face of more vigorous ideals in art.

In France, painting reflected social conditions more accurately, perhaps, than elsewhere. Following the collapse of Court influence, which on the whole had been lascivious and vicious in its effects on art, came an epoch glorious, blood-red, sweet "with dust of battle and deaths of kings." Then arose in art a cold classicism of which Louis David stood at the head. This man, who was a child of the Revolution, became Court painter to Napoleon, and originated the "Empire" or Neo-

Greek style: a style, as it were, rather "too wan for blushing, too warm for white."

With the brilliant campaigns of Napoleon came such painters of battle-scenes as Gros and Girard. After the Restoration the intellectual life of France flowed again in strong and often contending currents. Ingres was at the head of the Classicist school which harked back to the antique and which put its trust in perfect draughtmanship; while Delacroix, a great colourist of fine imagination, was at the head of the Romanticists. Battles raged between the two groups and their respective followers. This state of affairs was succeeded by the Barbizon revolt which flowed with the grace of waves that hold sunlight and sealight beneath their crests. Then arose the plein-airists, and at their front Bastien-Lepage, and finally the Impressionists with their dust of gold, of pearl and purple and of amber. And the Impressionists, as represented by such men as Monet and Manet and Degas, were in many respects more nearly in the right artistic road than has been generally admitted by their critics.

Impressionism, for instance, sought beauty of character even though it should lose form. It taught a new vision whereby even in mean and common things may be seen an element of attractiveness, if not of beauty; and their colours were as if purged with flame of all dross. This school suppressed details which did not augment the impression desired. It summarized as Nature

summarizes, and it lost outlines as Nature loses them in distance and shadow. Certainly the Impressionists surpassed the Academicians in action and emotive values. Where the academic painter froze his figure into a lifeless crystal of beautiful draughtsmanship, the Impressionist, through accent and suppression, instilled an intensity of living action. Thus the figures of Manet and Degas have caught a moving-picture quality which is very effective, even if open to much rational criticism. On the other hand, Impressionism is very prone to degeneration into ridiculous caricature in the hands of mediocre painters. But what form of art is not? Still, Impressionism has introduced a potent factor into modern painting both in Europe and America. Its four greatest modern masters are conceded to be Monet, Manet, Degas, and Whistler; and all four have been very good fighters.

The Academic school continued to flourish in France during the nineteenth century as revealed in the work of such accomplished painters as Meissonier, Bouguereau, Delaroche, Fleury, Gérôme, and others almost as well known. A certain sub-group of this school, called Orientalists, went to the East for their subjects, colour, and general picturesque sumptuousness. Among these were Decamps, Fromentin, Marilhat, Gérôme. The most noted decorative wall-painters were P. de Chavannes and Besnard; and finally, among the so-called Intimists, Le Sidaner was first.

In these days the tendency of painting is more and more away from academic methods and effects, while the heart of the public still timidly clings to the traditions of the Academy. I do not question the judgment of the painters as to art; but their attitude often reminds me of what Macaulay said of the Puritan who hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators.

CHAPTER XX

THE SECRET OF STAINED GLASS

STAINED glass of the thirteenth century has rarely been equalled for some of its fine qualities, and probably never surpassed. What the old masters learned from the workers in stained glass is mere conjecture. There was a time when stained-glass work was entirely in the hands of the glaziers. It was then little more than a mosaic structure composed of gemlike bits of coloured glass. Early in the evolution of the art the skill of the painter was required. Gradually the glazier became a mere assistant to the stained glass window-maker.

At first, the painter was called in to embellish, or perhaps to work up, the details of design which could not be done in lead. For the glazier's first mistake in art was to attempt the impossible. He forsook the fertile field of design for coloured illustrations. He tried to tell a story, whereas he would have done better if he had fixed his efforts on the glory of pattern. Splendid decorative effects were within his reach; but draped figures

and many other pictorial ambitions were beyond the glazier's art. This is where the painter's art became necessary, first, to supplement and, finally, to dominate, if not to supplant, the glazier's.

In the beginning it is probable that the painter used principally opaque colours, and that his problems were mainly of form and definition. His pigments were composed of metallic oxides mixed with finely powdered glass held together by some medium convenient to the hog-hair brush. The colours were applied to the glass and fused to its surface in a kiln. It is significant, however, that some of the Early Gothic glass was also treated with thin colours. It is fair to assume that this was done for a purpose; and that the purpose could be none other than to tint the glass, and thus add to its purity of tone in the general colour effect.

In the latter part of the thirteenth century, the Gothic design had become modified. Modelling was required, and new demands were made upon the technic of the cathedral window-maker. Stippling and cross-hatching were practised. High lights were generally brought out by rubbing through the matt or by scratching it with sharp-pointed sticks. This process persisted through the Middle Gothic period: approximately the fourteenth century. Even two centuries later the Swiss glass-painter used needle points in getting his lights, just as the etcher does for bringing out his dark lines.

Before the sixteenth century, the colour effects were pretty generally produced by qualities in the glass itself. Where the colour was too deep, as in ruby glass, a colourless "pot-metal" was fused on, which was then ground down sufficiently thin to admit the desired amount of light. High-light effects were often produced by grinding away the coloured layer. Thus it was practicable to get red on white or white on red glass. This led to the pot-metal reinforcing of different coloured glass, and to various pleasing effects obtained by abrading the surfaces. In addition to the fine qualities thus obtained, it was discovered early in the fourteenth century that glass could be stained yellow with a solution of silver under heat. The workers in this art then had means of getting red and yellow upon white glass, green on grey-blue, and yellow on blue or ruby. The yellow, ranging from pale straw colour to deep orange, was purely a stain applied to the abraded surfaces and attained by fire without recourse to pot-metal or enamel. These stains were remarkably pure in quality. The "white" glass was greatly improved, so that the technic of the stained-glass artisan had become relatively mobile and powerful. The "silvery white and golden" characteristics of later Gothic windows had their origin about that time.

Early in the sixteenth century, the most pleasing qualities of stained glass began to be sacrificed to facility of technic. The colour was sought in

enamel rather than in the glass itself. This marked the beginning of the end which came two centuries later in a compete degradation of the art. The colours produced by enamel were imperfect at best; they were often damaged by the process of firing; and they lacked all the rich charm and durability of the older glass. The enamel necessarily had to fuse at a lower temperature than that which would warp the glass. Consequently, the index of contraction and expansion of the two materials differed; the result being that the enamel easily crumbled and flaked off the glass under the attacks of time and the weather.

On the other hand, the very elements which ruined the stained glass dating from the latter part of the Renaissance period have by their assaults only enriched and glorified the earlier glass. Its very imperfections and impurities have added to its mystery of tone and charm of texture. The irregular surface-erosions, owing to its lack of homogeneity, and to the presence of air bubbles and chemical impurities, have increased its power of refraction. The innumerable little surface pits, scooped out by the fairy fingers of wind and weather, have gathered an impalpable powder of blown dust,—all which adds to the tone some mellow glory, the secret of which we have been unable to lure from the heart or to wrench from the hand of time.

Those who know somewhat of the technics of the old masters and the stained-glass workers of

the best periods of the art of each must be struck with an obvious relationship which existed between them. The secret of this relationship dances in the phenomena of thwarted and resisted light and in the principles of colour when it is purified by opposing media arranged in layers, balanced by juxtaposition, supplemented by happy arrangement, and hallowed by a harmony which broods over the emotions of man until they detach themselves from his flesh and seem capable of dwelling apart from the material world. This, so far as is known to the contrary, is all there is in the fable of the Lost Secret of Stained Glass.

CHAPTER XXI

THE SECRET OF THE OLD MASTERS

THE secret of the old masters is that they had none, as someone has said of the Free Masons. So far as the old masters are concerned, it is probably true that they had no secrets unknown to the modern masters. The belief that they had is a myth which has long been popular with painters. It reached the height of its absurdity during the middle of the eighteenth century. Even today, some well-known colourists are seeking the "lost secret" as assiduously as Sir Joshua Reynolds did, and as other men have searched for the Philosopher's Stone and the Fountain of Youth.

This myth arose from certain marked successes of some of the older men, and parallel failures of many of the younger. The old masters put into their pictures superb qualities which have long attracted the attention of the art world; but more particularly, the permanency of their colour is in striking contrast with the comparatively ephemeral results of the majority of the more recent painters.

The poor workman blames his tools; and those

who do not succeed find fault with chance. Thus failure is always a breeder of excuses; inefficiency is an immemorial explainer. But tools are not like cards when the hand is dealt by hazard; and the making of pigments is not a lost art, but one that has grown enormously since the fourteenth century; and the making of pigments into paints has never before been equalled for its scientific accuracy. The "secret," therefore, could not have been pigmental; and it is very unlikely that the old masters employed any medium unknown to modern research. What may be likened to a secret, perhaps, was in their *application* of the very materials which have been within reach of painters since their time, and the possibilities of which have been no secret to the student, whether artist or layman.

T. H. Fielding, in 1846, said: "We cannot see any valid reason why a painting in oil might not be so wrought as to preserve its tints in as great a state of purity, or very nearly so, as when first executed." That is the opinion of the best painters today.

A relatively small number of painters, commonly called "Old Masters," who worked between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries, produced pictures of many excellent qualities and of remarkable permanency of colour. If these pictures had been the result merely of secret methods, colours, and media, there would have been thousands of masterpieces where there were only hundreds.

If these works depended upon secrets, the secrets were too widely contemporaneous to have been of the entailed order: from father to son, or from master to pupil. They could hardly have been guild-secrets since the tendency of the guild-secret was to "leak out," and consequently where there was one old master there would have been many. Paradoxical though it may be, the very small number of old masters amongst all the thousands of painters of their time makes it probable that their work did not depend upon a secret. Again, if there had been a secret order or any kind of esoteric organic pact among artists for the protection of their professional secrets, it is very unlikely that it should have vanished so utterly that not even a tradition of it remained. Especially is this true of a period not very remote and of an art the continuity of which has not been broken.

The enlightened members of mankind no longer regard as mysterious anything in the painter's art; indeed, few others are better understood by the lay student. It is a very simple art judged by the many simpletons in it, but mainly because its mechanical and scientific problems are few. And yet it is a very difficult art because its most telling factor is emotive. No hint, or shadow of one, has been discovered in the art that indicates a *raison d'être* for any profound secret upon which a masterpiece depends. Moreover, the fact that masterpieces have been painted by artists who have disclaimed any such secret would quite do

away with its necessity and weaken its probability almost to nothing.

It is reasonable, therefore, to infer that the only secrets of the old masters were merely studio-formulæ more than less empirical. In the slow development of an age-long art, many short-cuts in technic were discovered. Some were the results of accident; some arose from the unconscious method at work and revealed when "the thing feels right"; a few were born of thought, that is to say, formulated by the study of natural phenomena and reduced to a science; such as the laws of optics, the relations of light and shade, the chemistry of pigments, and the relations of colours; and, most important of all, the psychology which harmonizes the subjective conception of a thing with its objective appearance and its representation in counterfeit media of restricted chromatic scale, and in only two dimensions, or on a flat surface.

These problems must have been studied, since some of them were firmly grasped by the old masters. Power over these problems was most likely obtained through a variety of methods, the chief of which presumably were careful observation, close comparison, and honest labour intelligently directed. For, according to Burnet and Murray, "an artist . . . is something like a butterfly—he must be a grub, and even a caterpillar, for a length of time, before he is able to mount into the regions of air and light."

Thus technic gradually took on tangibility.

In general, not to speak of its varieties, it became the easiest, because the surest and safest, road to the approximate end desired. The knowledge which was slowly acquired accumulated in studios, passed through generations, and crystallized into precepts and formulæ. The secret of the formula counted for little; but the emotive character of the painter who applied the formula made all the difference between a masterpiece and an inferior work; and the intelligence with which the formula was used mechanically made all the difference between permanency and ephemerality of the painting.

That particular emotive characteristic which enables a painter to produce a masterpiece cannot be transferred to another in a recipe, however secretly confided or sacredly guarded. It burns, as it were, only in the wick of the master; and it may be likened to the flame of a candle which can be passed to another candle, but which cannot ignite a pastille of clay. The secret of the masterpiece is a prisoner of the soul of the master. His only means of liberating it is in his work. He has no other key to the door and the prisoner will not accept freedom through the window. And thus it is truly that the prisoner is more powerful than the master, who at best serves for a little time as the keeper, never rising to a higher station than that of an amanuensis to some inscrutable power more impelling than his own will.

The painter's means hardly permit him to

approximate nature. The colours on his palette are very different from those of the solar spectrum. A real artist frankly admits his limitations; he is forced to rely on abstract suggestion rather more than on concrete representation. A successful painting achieves through skilful drawing a clear mental symbol of something in nature. Well-selected colours applied in careful relationship not only increase the probability of the fiction, but add an emotional value to the illusion. The representation is constructed of form, that is to say, of light and shade and of colour. These are the basic factors of a painting. Pictorial illusion embraces more and goes farther. Refinements of colour, broken and properly adjusted, outstrip the primitive-symbolic, or the simply representative, element and invade the emotional realm of the mind. Balance, contrast, and supplementary qualities in tone, colour, vibration, and design or pattern increase the picture's sway and power over the emotions to a pitch which may be called poetic and in which there are many degrees. At this point it is no longer a painting; it has become something more; we call it a masterpiece. It has succeeded in creating an infinite number of subtle links attaching it to a world of concepts wherein latent longings are aroused, secret dreams called forth, and aspirations are born anew.

Of the essential qualities in a masterpiece, durability is one of the least, if indeed it may be included at all. Permanency is desirable; but at

most it is only relative. Thousands of superb paintings have perished like burning flax because the master did not possess, or did not choose to apply, the knowledge in his technic which an inferior workman might easily have acquired. No one at this time, whose opinion is worth while, will deny that a technic developed by the "scientific method" is less likely to produce an ephemeral work than a technic, however brilliant and dashing, which is the result of a haphazard method.

The integrity and permanency of colour in so many of the old masterpieces may be reasonably accounted for without recourse to hypothetical secrets. In the first place, the old masters, for the most part, mixed only compatible colours. Their palettes were simple, containing eight or nine pigments at the outside. It is manifestly easier to avoid the disaster of an incompatible mixture where only a few colours are used than where as many as two hundred or more are available, as there happen to be at the present time. In the palette of the old masters, however, simple as it was, there were incompatible pigments. Yellow ochre, white and madder lake have long been used in making "flesh colour." But when the yellow earth is mixed with the vegetal lake, the two pigments so act upon each other chemically that the resultant colour soon degenerates from a "bright flesh" to "a sickly, pale, ghastly mud colour." Owing to this reaction, the two pigments are chemically incompatible and there-

fore they become so chromatically. Yet when they are used together by such masters as the Italian and Flemish and, notably, by Hals, their paintings even today show no appreciable degradation of colour.

The reason why these colours hold up so well through the centuries is found in the method of their application, that is to say, in glazing. The warring pigments were put on separately; and one layer was allowed to dry before another was superposed. Indeed this method was often used even with pigments that were known to be compatible. Each layer of colour was locked up in a medium which was resinous in the beginning or which later became so through oxidation. In this way the incompatible pigments were protected from one another and from the atmospheric gases by the different strata of medium and by the enveloping material in which all the particles were imbedded. Not only were the pigments thus protected from harm and chemical hurt, but they were at the same time enhanced in colour value by a well-known principle in optics whereby discordant rays of light are "screened off" and, as mentioned elsewhere, converted into heat. In order, then, to understand how the Italian, Flemish, and Dutch old masters achieved certain fine qualities in their work, it is only necessary to study the glaze and to consider its possibilities.

An exaggerated illustration of the glaze may be made with white paper and a piece of coloured

glass. The deeper intensity of colour seen when the glass rests on the paper than when it is held up to the eye, is obvious and easily explained: When the glass lies on the paper, the light must pass through the glass to reach the paper. The light, to reach the eye, must now be reflected from the paper and pass a second time through the glass. Whereas, when the glass is held before the eye some distance away from the paper, the light passes only once through the glass, on its way from the paper to the eye. In this position of glass and paper, the light has half the saturation of colour that it receives when the glass lies flat upon the paper. In other words, the intensity of colour produced by light passing twice through the tinted glass is equal to that produced by a plate of glass doubled in thickness.

A glaze, therefore, is merely any tinted transparent coat laid on a ground of any colour. The ground or body colour reflects only the light which it has not absorbed. A glaze permits the body colour to pass through and subtracts only such colour as it absorbs. For obvious reasons, the old master used white as a bottom layer. The slight refractive power of the glaze offers little resistance to light which is reflected from the white ground. The more transparent the glaze, the lower the index of refraction. An increase of colouring matter in the medium used for the glaze raises its refractive index, and, properly selected and apportioned, it enriches the body light. By

following the same principle, the painter has at hand a sweet method of cooling his body colours by the addition of white. On the contrary, madder red, for instance, produces a warm glaze, which when mixed with white leans toward the violet.

A little experimentation with the glaze discovers a means of producing many beautiful effects otherwise impossible to paints. And when it is admitted that the æsthetic value of a painting depends on its pleasing effect on the eye and its power over the emotions,—moreover, that its commercial value is affected by its durability,—the possibilities of the glaze at once become important. As Cicero says: "How many things do painters (*pictores*) see, whether in shadows or in the highest lights which are not seen by us!"

It is impossible to get the purity and beauty of pigments applied solidly and directly that shimmer from two similar colours when one is used as a glaze. Take an opaque red—Venetian, Indian, or vermilion—as a ground colour and glaze it with madder lake. The result approximates the spectrum. The white in the ground surface is coloured red by the glaze and the red light issues forth in all its purity, depth, and brilliancy. The same general law applies to other colours. Effects vary according to the colours used. An opaque ground glazed with a different colour slightly increases the complexity of the process, which, however, is simple enough if it be remembered that the glaze acts as a screen in sifting its

complementary colour from the transmitted light as it passes through. Thus it will be found that alizarine destroys principally green, and that mineral or Prussian blue absorbs reddish yellow, and so on. The opaque ground colour reflects its own colour while absorbing its complementary. As colour is a phenomenon of etheric vibration in which the wave-length is a determining factor, the length of wave permitted to pass through the glaze determines its colour value. The glaze, then, permits only certain colours to pass through it; and the opaque ground colour beneath reflects only such colours as are not complementary to it. These reflected colours, in passing outward through the glaze, are again screened, with the result that the range of colour is reduced, while the white light is destroyed as light and converted into heat.

It follows that if the opaque ground colour is glazed with a colour which approaches it in the spectrum, more light will be reflected, and it will be of greater purity and brilliancy of colour than would result if the colours chosen were farther apart. For the farther apart the colours are in the spectral series, the less light will be reflected, and, therefore, the darker must be the effect. For example: shades of red and orange, yellow and green, blue and violet, used as ground colour and glaze, add to the brilliancy and purity of the effect. On the other hand, black may be intensified by glazing it alternately with such complementary colours as indigo or mineral blue and burnt sienna

or alizarine. Indeed the best way perhaps to produce a black effect, where it is required in a painting, is by the filter process: a glaze which causes interference with the waves of light which produce colour. The technical advantage of this method over the absorption process lies in the fact that no pigment has been found that is perfect in its properties of absorption. Another effective means may be had in the reflection method. That is to say, the reflection of light from the surfaces of very thin layers of glaze. Since the discovery of "Newton's rings" it has been known that colour-rays having virtually the same wave-length may be neutralized when reflected so that the crests of one series of waves fall into the hollows of the other.

By following these laws beautiful effects may be had in producing the illusion of limpid water, of sunlight streaming through stained-glass windows or green leaves, and of the fiery hues of an autumn scene. Thus the skilful glazer possesses a magic over his colours which like so many nimble and airy servitors trip on his canvas at command, so that if he paints water, foam is amber, if gravel, it is gold.

The old masters were aware of this general principle which they applied extensively, especially in the painting of draperies, fabrics, and garments when it was desired to make them more beautiful in colour than realistic in representation. For the most part, it is not likely that they understood

the laws of optics scientifically, or that they appreciated the principles involved in the refraction of light as related to the properties of opaque and transparent pigments. High and low indexes of refraction probably had no meaning to them in a scientific sense. And yet, many qualities in their best works show that the laws of optics were not violated; and that the principles of colour relationship, and that the properties of colours themselves, were not neglected.

As I have intimated, long experience and careful observation crystallized into technic, which was to all purposes empirical. In this sense, the secret of the old masters was in the application of such formulæ in their work as had shown the best practical results. Apart from this, it is more than probable that they had no *secret*, as we understand the word used in this relation, and consequently it could not have been lost.

CHAPTER XXII

IDEALS

ART has too many sides to be seen all at once; and it has so many problems that no one person seems capable of solving them all. Even the Jove-like Rodin discusses some of them at times as might an old demigod in his dotage. Then he is as illogical and contradictory as a coquette. For example, in his apostrophe to the *Venus of Melos*, he says:

> There are people who say to you, "the ideal." If this word is not void of meaning, it signifies only stupidity. The Ideal! The Fantasy! But the realities of nature surpass our most ambitious fancies. . . .
>
> Man is incapable of creating, of inventing. He can only approach nature, submissively, lovingly. . . .

If this is Gospel, then one might reasonably inquire into the object of Rodin's ceaseless work. Why should not a cast from his beloved "nature" better take the place of a sculpture by this mighty man? If his statement is true, it would follow that his colossal genius should be employed in the selecting of models. These could be reproduced

mechanically with greater accuracy than by the master's magic hand. It would also follow that a coloured photograph might be made into a finer picture than one of Corot's palpitating dawns shuddering into day.

But he also says: "The glory of the Antique is in having understood Nature." That is to say, it is self-evident in the ancient masterpiece that the artist *understood nature*. The founder of idealism, Berkeley himself, could hardly claim more. "Thus," says Professor Perry in *Present Philosophical Tendencies*, "while the burden of idealism is a religious interpretation of nature, its cardinal principle is a theory of knowledge. For the purposes of technical philosophy it consists in a single proposition, to the effect that knowledge is an originating or creative process. . . ."

A little farther along, Rodin is by turns rhapsodic, emphatic, illuminative, vague. It would be difficult for any idealist to excel him in this:

> O Venus of Melos, the prodigious sculptor that fashioned you knew how to make the thrill of that generous nature flow in you, the thrill of life itself—O Venus, arch of the triumph of life, bridge of truth, circle of grace! . . .
>
> The generative profile of that torso helps us to understand, reveals to us the proportions of the world. And the miracle is in this, that the assembled profiles, in the sense of depth, of length, and of width, express, by an incomprehensible magic, the human soul and

its passions, and the character that shapes the heart of beings.

The ancients have obtained by a minimum of gesture, by their modelling, both the individual character and the grace borrowed from grandeur that relates the human form to the forms of universal life. The modelling of the human being has with them all the beauty of the curved line of flowers. And the profiles are secure, ample like those of great mountains; it is architecture. Above all, they are simple; they are calm like the serpents of Apollo. . . .

Left to themselves the ignorant see only the apparent details of things; the source of expression, the synthesis alone eloquent, escapes them. . . .

In the synthesis of the work of art, the arms, the legs, count only when they meet in accordance with the planes that associate them in a same effect, and it is thus in nature, who cares not for our analytical descriptions. The great artists proceed as nature composes and not as anatomy decrees. They never sculpture any muscle, any nerve, any bone for itself; it is the whole at which they aim, and which they express; it is by large planes that their work vibrates in the light or enters into the shadow. . . .

Sublime pride of marble! Tranquil life of the soul of the body! Nature is an uninterrupted harmony. . . .

That face has the variety and the liberty of a flower, and the artist, leaning attentively over it, rises as one vowed to religion; he has heard Venus speak. . . .

. . . O mouth so simple, so natural, so generous! It holds thousands of kisses! . . .

The soul of shapes breathes in the profound life of this thrilling body. I see her magnificent armature

of bones as I see her thoughts—all her grace hidden and present, how powerfully organized! In this form sweet as honey, where the eye surprises neither blacks nor violent lights, but where life flows without jerks or starts, clear as live water, one feels keenly the resistance of a resolute and powerful frame! Supported by these bases that will not weaken, sure of their solidity, the flesh bounds with joy as if it would escape the redoubled shadows deepening under the breasts, that they may rise from the torso, whence glowing light would seem to emanate. . . .

The shadows, the divine play of shadows on antique marbles! One might say that the shadows love masterpieces. They hang upon them, they make for them adornment. I find only among the Gothics and with Rembrandt such orchestras of shadows. They surround beauty with mystery; they pour peace over us, and allow us to hear without trouble that eloquence of the flesh that ripens and amplifies the spirit. That eloquence darts on us the truth, diffuse as light. It is the radiancy of gladness. What secret emotion invades me before the meditated grace of this design! Ineffable passages of light into shadow! Inexpressible splendours of half-tones! Nests of love! What marvels that have not yet a name in this sacred body! Venus Genetrix! Venus Victorum! O total glory of grace and of genius!

Admiration overtakes me like sleep. The Venus of Melos is reflected by all the others; in them is accentuated one or another of her infinite beauties.

In this one, free of all draperies, the modelling of the shadows makes the flesh breathe even more voluptuously; that thigh, column of life, is literally quivering. . . .

The upper part of the body inclines in a gesture of reverence; movement how gracious! where the Gothic and the Renaissance find their symbol.

And again this one, what instinct bends it into an arc of grace! A single curve made of all those, of the shoulders, of the legs, designs the kneeling Venus. . . .

Badly proportioned the results are truly blasphemies against nature. They no longer have eloquence, and breed only harshness and meagreness. From a distance, moreover, measure yields the most powerful results. The Venus of Melos in particular owes to this moderation her power of effect. There is nothing abrupt. Approaching her step by step, one imagines that she has been gradually modelled by the continuous effort of the sea.

Is this not what the ancients wished to say in affirming that Aphrodite was born of the womb of the waters?

And yet Rodin imagines, or affects to believe, that he is a realist. The discerning world does not behold him as such, neither shall time so regard him, for he is one of the supreme idealists of all the ages, to whom art is "wine and honey, balm and leaven." He is so much like Nature's self that age cannot wither him, nor custom stale his infinite variety.

The same broad principles apply equally to sculpture and painting. In fact, art is spiritually homogeneous. It is concerned with that which being beautiful bears intellectual and emotional relationships which are broadly humane and pleasant, and therefore idealistic. In the words

of C. Grant La Farge: "It is a recent thing that separates the arts, that makes us think of painting and sculpture as isolated objects."

Art viewed sympathetically is observed to be a phenomenon concomitant with the higher orderly development of human ideals wherein intellectual processes are associated with the nobler emotions. Thus art created by man reacts upon his soul to make it better, finer, and more capable, more altruistic, in a word, more ideally humane.

And therefore are the great artists the powerful instruments of civilization; their work not only reflects the spirit of the times but thrills it with a new life, and opens the eyes of the soul to the wonders and beauty of an ideal world. And thus are the great artists the benefactors, the blessed philanthropists of mankind. They quicken the human being with reverence so that they who were blind are made to see. A lordly pleasure house has been built for the soul.

No one can behold understandingly a superb work of art without adding at the same time something to that human attribute which for short we call the soul. And any art which mars the soul, or which detracts from the humanity which is in us, is not art, but diabolism masked with artifice. Unfortunately, this diabolism has always been too evident among the freakish, pandering horde of pseudo-artists and twisted art-fanatics. It is a subjective disease, however, rather than an

objective error in art itself. The fault is in the lover, not in his mistress.

A well-known English archæologist is reported to have said: "In case of fire it would be better to allow a live baby to burn than a Dresden Madonna. If the dreadful choice were forced upon me, I should certainly save the Dresden Madonna first. One can get another baby any day."

If the gentleman is correctly quoted, he pays no tribute to art, and certainly none to himself. Of course, one is not to be blamed for the misfortune of having spiritually ingrowing toe-nails and outgrowing claws; but to expose a deformity with a chuckle is to add bad manners to bad luck. Why an interest in art predisposes the æsthetic invert to parade his moral obliquity might be a good theme for an essay on one of the obscure branches of pathology.

To a normal being, art has no purpose and less value when purchased by selfishness and preserved by cruelty. Self-abnegation, smothered hope, despoiled dreams, ceaseless toil, and secret tears,—these are the soil from which great art springs; and the real lovers of art savour of this soil. True nobility, in one form or another, has been associated with the triumph of art through all the ages. Love, Hope, and Sorrow! these are the materials with which the masters have made their dreams of art; or they may be likened to spirits who guide the pencil of the painter, the pen of the poet, and the chisel of the sculptor. Art and Nature are

twin gods who strangely sacrifice the individual to preserve the instinct—which should give us somewhat of a jolting hint.

The sophistry of one being able to "get another baby any day" is almost too low for words. That one babe may be put into the cradle of another is as true as that one picture may take the place of another on the wall; but with that, all truth and decency end, and elaboration would be repulsive. So far as the difficulties of mere duplication are concerned, it would be infinitely easier to duplicate a destroyed Dresden Madonna than a burned babe. In the first place, it requires something higher than a jackass to father a child; and in the second, the human soul is never duplicated; neither can one child ever take the place of another. The thought of sacrificing the meanest human being for even the noblest work of art never entered a sane mind south of the Rhine.

Pierre Loti, in deprecating our fancied loss of ideals, wails: "Alas! we have come to value bread more than Art." Loti may be forgiven much because he is himself an artist who has laboured and brought forth. His wail, however, suggests another side to the question of ideals. Metaphorically, he values, as we all do, art above bread. And yet actually and very properly the world has always prized bread above art, and it always will so long as man retains his animal body. Seriously to thrust art into the lists with bread is an abnor-

mal, if not a crazy, thought. The things are farther apart than the poles.

One of the devolutionary influences opposed to the ideals of art is the noisome fanatic. When he turns critic he becomes a public nuisance. I believe it was Laurence Sterne who said: "Of all the cants which are canted in this canting world, though the cant of hypocrites may be the worst, the cant of criticism is the most tormenting." The most casual dunce assumes that he is capable of criticizing almost anything in art, while as a matter of fact few things are more difficult. Of course, the usual obstacle to exact writing on art is an unruly imagination, since it is prone to take liberties with any subject; another pinch to climb, possibly even more common, is an ignorance of the limitations of the particular art discussed. Painting, as any other branch, has its boundaries beyond which it cannot go. It cannot hope to justify the acrobatic feats of a romantic imagination in a wild state. Writers on art, since Pliny and before, have suffered from these two faults: too much imagination and too little knowledge. Job understood this when he said: "He multiplieth words without knowledge."

A painting, for instance, which is given credit for various qualities which are dissimilar in their nature or conflicting in effect, is not as highly praised as the critic may fancy. A work of art that contains one superb quality may contain many other qualities which support the one; but

it is loading it rather heavily to give it several *principal qualities*, which, even if compatible, are apt to neutralize or at least to weaken one another. Nature must obey necessity.

Art as a sociological phenomenon is only affected in a large sense by the permanence of sociological conditions; these upbuild, uphold, and finally depress the organization of a State. As the conditions of a State change, that which is favourable to its well-being slowly rises to a maximum and then gradually declines. In a word, the State is subject to the laws of adaptability and to the pressure of environment. Art is observed to move in a parallel manner, although its time-scale need not coincide with that of the State, since the principles of art are too universal to yield much to the local pressure called patriotism, or to suffer disintegration necessarily with the State's death. Nevertheless, when a State declines until a revolution intervenes between the old and new governments, its art enters into eclipse.

But there is always this difference between the life-changes of art and those of the State: the evolution of the State seems to require abrupt changes, such as revolutions or inter-State war, in order to form new species, while art passes on in a rhythmic course through periods of light and shadow, and while maintaining an unbroken continuity, it is able to transform itself into new species, at the same time retaining its old instincts.

Whenever the golden glow of wealth shifts from

one part of the world to another, the forsaken area is enveloped by what is logically called a "dark age." This is precisely what happened to Western Europe when the commerce of the later Roman Empire was directed eastward, and its wealth shifted to the Levant. But a dark age does not mean that art perishes and that all the other fruits of progress wither. Many good results of civilization persist even under the most unfavourable conditions because the ideals of man were not born to die.

In 1914, we were well started in an astonishing age. Science was playing a part new to the dreams of mankind. The powers of synthesis were gradually catching up to those of analysis. The inventive faculty had grown into a racial tendency, gathering terrific momentum and subjecting us to daily surprises which were bewildering. A new spirit seemingly had entered the world unless some old spirit had disguised itself mightily. And this new, or veiled, spirit was prying into things from every conceivable angle of inquiry, and with means and methods most subtle, with instruments delicate, ingenious, and ponderous. Speculative science was obsessed by the puzzling quest of truth which it worshipped as a god, and to which practical science paid the homage of a singular faithfulness to fact. Art was slowly rising toward the ancient heights known as Grecian. Rodin was bringing forth miracles from stone; a few painters had reached the

stature of the old masters; Mistral had only just passed away; Maeterlinck was writing his name among those of the immortals; and a unique character occupied a throne—by happy accident, or the wisdom of Fate, a great king was at the head of the Belgian State.

Puff! bang!—the machinery of civilization blew up, or was blown up by a royal ruffian who was half mad. Germany reverted to barbarism and brutalized Austria-Hungary. A great and powerful people suddenly turned bandits. All semblance of honour was thrown to the winds; sacred ruins and monuments of art were ruthlessly destroyed; mercy was stamped out; human justice was ignored; brutality was decorated with the iron cross; rape, rapine, and murder were spread over Europe.

The heroic instincts of the Great Republic were rendered impotent by a government which was remarkable for its moral mountebanks, and their worse underlings. Governmentally, the United States of America remained criminally "neutral," and forced eighty per cent. or more of its citizens into a most shameful attitude toward righteousness. Morally, our nation was contemptible in the sight of mankind. Our Government wagged its tail complacently and seemed to believe that a neutral dog was better than a fighting lion.

The ideals of art passed immediately into red eclipse. The æsthetic impulses of civilized Europe were rudely transmuted into grim determination;

artistic energy turned into defensive channels already choked with blood. The British Empire was solidified as if by magic; Russia's idealism became instantly practical, gigantic, altruistic; France forgot her frivolous distractions and became possessed of a Spartan soul. That marvellous nation became, over-night, the splendid reincarnation of the Greek spirit when to be a Greek was better than to be a king.

The impetuosity of this age shall not be stayed, but led by a new passion for truth and justice, it must inevitably result in new ideals as it changes the conditions of life and alters the trajectory of life's forces. We shall see old faiths with their fretting fears pass away for ever; the conscience of man will no longer be considered a safe guide of conduct. The dominant religion of Europe and America has already begun to change almost insensibly into another of which Socialism may be one of its stages. Feminism, more than ever before, will be forced to the front, and compelled to play its brilliant part in the drama of world-life. A broader and better morality, interwoven with science, will supplant the one that has long been supported by faith and fear and which is rotten with hypocrisy. The spirit of solidarity of ideal, interest, and action among the toiling millions will cease to be only a hope, but it will become the most significant fact of this period. Various humane movements like refreshing waters will wash away the stains of blood and crime which

now incarnadine our little valley bordered with mountains of shining stars. Our thirst for bigger and better things than War, which so long has known only bitter waters, will become intenser and finally universal.

All this must necessarily affect art by quickening its ideals, possibly to such an illustrious degree that future historians shall designate the period as the *Vraienaissance*. As we have no time-scale applicable to art, and no inspired Prophets, we cannot foretell the epoch. We only know that art is neither perfect nor stationary; and we believe that it will not stagnate in the midst of mighty movement and of forward change. What it shall bring forth during the pregnant centuries before us, no living person can now predict.

The next step to be made in the art of painting will probably come through the influence of Japanese ideals. They are already sifting slowly into some of the noblest work of the West, where it is beginning to be felt that back of all our changing forms of matter and transitory subjects of art, there is something akin to a universal spirit or pantheistic soul. As Emerson says:

> Nature is a mutable cloud which is always and never the same.

The problem will be to express this soul, or phases of it, in broad generalizations guided by the decorative instinct, and sustained by the love of beauty, and enriched by exquisite emotive

values detached from all crude and distracting non-essentials. Then shall the painter equal the poet in giving unto each according to his needs: according to his æsthetic capacity and scope of emotional experience. Then shall art avoid all signs of the superflux of pain, and preserve only the fadeless beauty of things that fade, since

> Time dissipates to shining ether the solid angularity of facts.

So long as present pigments and vehicles are used, the masters in future, it is fair to assume, will be Western Tonalists in technic and Eastern Pantheists in ideals. Their shadows shall be crystalline; forms shall be clothed like summer, dressed in a raiment of sighs and rose leaves; while the aureoled heads of saints shall pass with other fugitive things not good to treasure. And then shall

> The hooded clouds, like friars,
> Tell their beads in drops of rain.

As the balance must be preserved between art and science, between romanticism and realism, between the soft graces of fancy and the hard lines of fact, the painting of the future is not likely to fall away from idealism. The painters must express then as now the finer things which Life feels, hopes, and holds: the mind's noblest

conceptions, love's most beautiful dreams, the music-like harmonies of the emotions, and all the longing fancies, possible to their technic, that shall throng the spacious dome of time.

NOTE

When Professor Henry Fairfield Osborn's *Men of the Old Stone Age: Their Environment, Life, and Art* was published, *The Philosophy of Painting* was in press. The chapter on "Prehistoric Painting," therefore, did not have the benefit of Professor Osborn's masterly presentation of the art in Aurignacian times. The researches of the Professor and of his distinguished associates, however, amply justify the author's speculations as to the antiquity of painting. The facts correlated and set forth by this renowned authority lead to philosophic deductions parallel to those presented in this Study.

The readers who may be interested in the most complete and scholarly exposition of the subject extant are referred to Professor Osborn's book which, to use his own words, has the unique distinction of being illustrated in part by "the Upper Palæolithic artists of the now extinct Crô-Magnon race." Many of these designs are graceful and spirited, beautiful in form and colour.

Man, we know, is an old plodder. It required a long time for him to learn how to walk on his hind legs; how to change his front feet into hands; how to develop a dexterity which should keep pace with his growing mind; and, finally, how to create an art.

A phase of his evolution may be visualized in verse by adding a few lines to the five quoted from Horace as they appear in Professor Osborn's volume:

"When men first crept from out earth's womb, like worms,
"Dumb speechless creatures, scarce with human forms,
"With nails or doubled fists they used to fight
"For acorns or for sleeping-holes at night;
"Clubs followed next; at last to arms they came";
And meanwhile longing taught them how to frame
An intuition vague with boundary-lines;
And then the love of mimicry entwines
With loftier imagery, until the heart
Of Prehistoric man sowed seeds of art
That found congenial soil in bark and bone,
Took root in sunless galleries of stone;
Thenceforth a vine crept round the smiling earth
To bear the blossoms of benignant worth.

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